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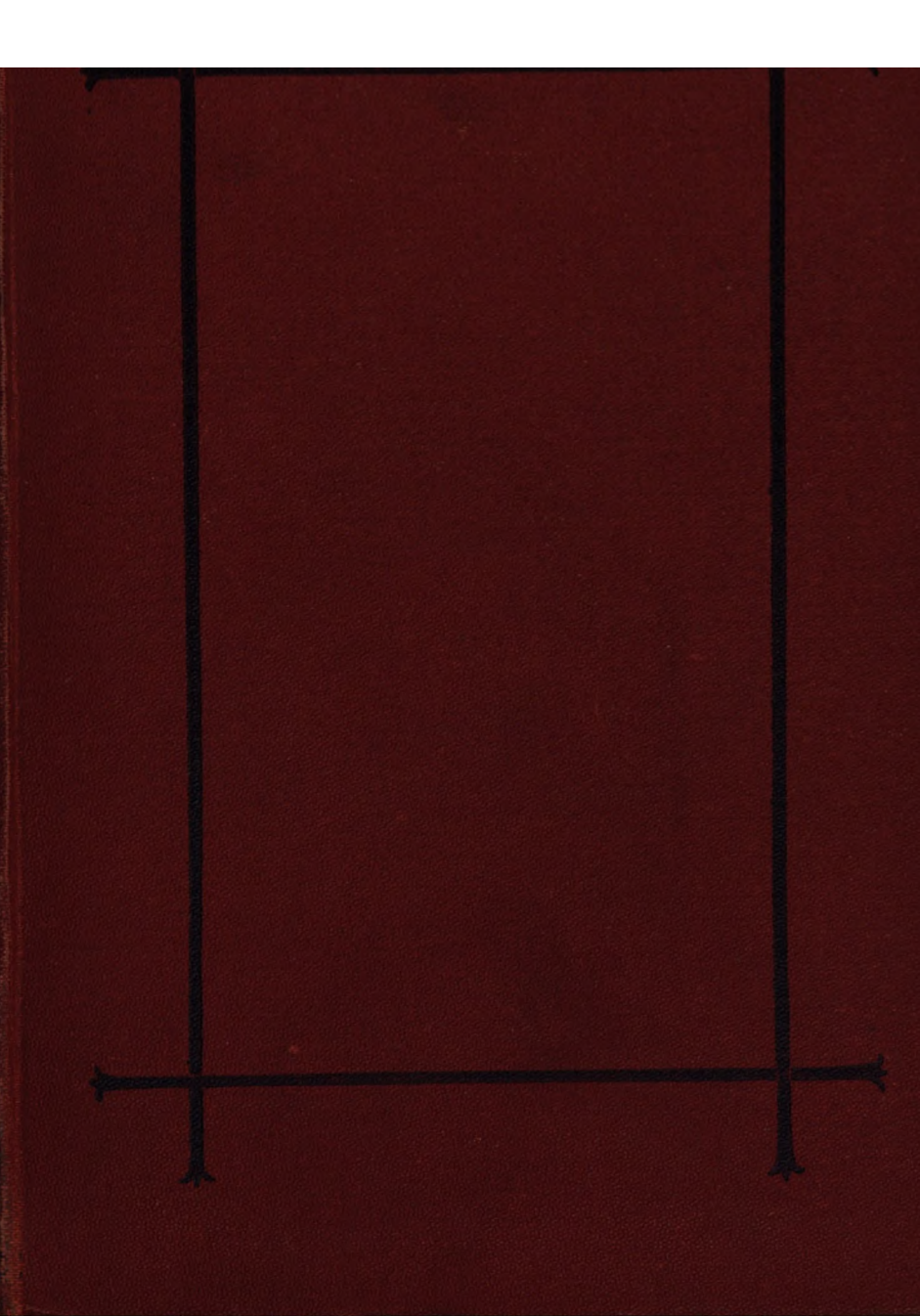
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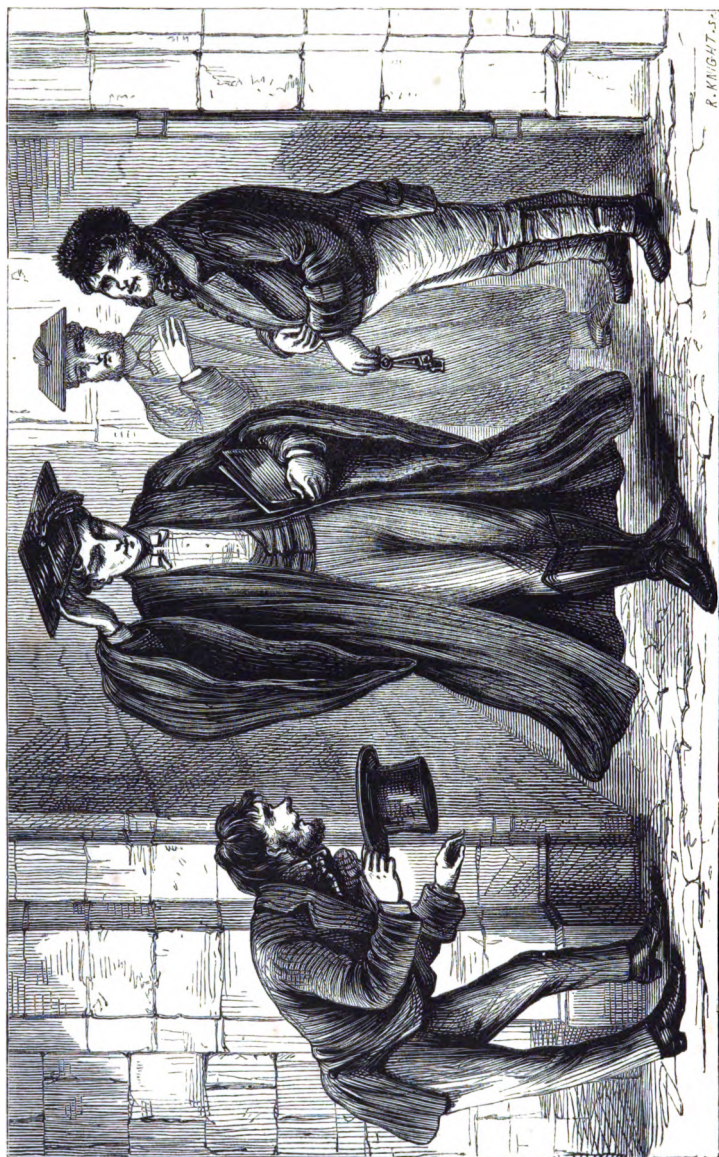
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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
A CORNISH RECTOR.



For a moment the little man stared at him with a puzzled air, then drew himself up close to the wall, and bowed low to the silk gown and gold-tasselled cap. "A close shave that, Mr. Tregenna, sir," said the porter.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
A CORNISH RECTOR.

BY THE LATE
JAMES HAMLEY TREGENNA.

**"Ez kez? ez, po neg ez? ina sez kez,
Dro kez; po negez nez, dro peth ez."**

**"Is there cheese? is there or is there not? If there be cheese, bring cheese; if
there is no cheese, bring what there is."—*Old Cornish Proverb.***

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY


OF

A CORNISH RECTOR.

CHAPTER I.

"Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din;
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery."

SCOTT—*Marmion*.

FTER our last battle I had been returned as "disabled by a contusion, inflicted by a spent stone towards the close of the engagement." During several days of really severe suffering consequent on this misadventure, my sick bed was watched anxiously and tenderly by dear Katherine and Richard, and by another, whom I have not yet mentioned, though from the very beginning almost of my school career, our hearts had been drawn towards one another.

Frederick Wells was an orphan grandson of old General Jenkinson. Parents he had never known, for within a month of the news reaching England that his father had fallen before the walls of Bergen op Zoom, his broken-hearted mother had died in child-bed. So the lonely boy was brought up in the old General's house, under the affectionate, though somewhat fidgety superintendence of his two aunts, themselves the orphan children of a brave soldier. When far advanced in life, General Jenkinson had contracted a second marriage with the daughter of a neighbouring squire of small means—a mere girl, whom, if the gossip of that day was to be trusted, he had purchased from her father, after the Eastern fashion, for sundry pieces of silver. The real fact, I believe, was, that the old man had paid off a mortgage which pressed heavily on the tiny resources of the squire. But, however this may have been, at any rate the girl discharged loyally her duties both as a wife, and, as far as she knew how, as a mother to the orphan boy whom cruel fate had thrown on their hands. She was

not remarkable for wisdom, I believe, but, as Frederick used to say, all her little sense was turned in the right direction. The gentlest, the kindest creature that ever breathed, she bore patiently the little oddities of her two maiden nieces, the youngest of whom was at least twenty years her senior ; as well as the fractious humours of the poor old imbecile to whom she had tied herself. I do not think there was a word of exaggeration in the epitaph, which many years after the time of which I am writing, was engraved on a plain slab in Kenwyn churchyard :—

“To the best of her power, she fulfilled her duty Godward
and Manward.”

Frederick was at this time awaiting the fulfilment of a promise made years before by Admiral Reynolds, an old friend and protégé of the General's, that whenever he hoisted his flag, the first vacant midshipman's berth on board his ship should be filled by his old patron's grandson. I believe a similar appointment might have been obtained for him elsewhere at an earlier period, through the General's interest ; but

all who professed to understand such matters agreed in thinking that the advantage of being in a fine ship, and she the flag-ship, was well worth waiting for. Alas! how true it is, though oftentimes we are slow to acknowledge it, that

"There's a Divinity that *shapes* our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."*

But of this hereafter. At present all was joyful anticipation, for Frederick's honest heart was already in the profession, which he had chosen. Latterly he had been a good deal withdrawn from our school through the necessity of studying navigation under the superintendence of an old wooden-legged salt, who in his better days had served as a master's mate. Poor old fellow! His most confident boast was that he had forgotten more than any of us ever knew—which most likely was the truth. How much he had remembered we were not capable of judging; but little or much, it was all that could be got in our town in the way of nautical instruction.

* Shakspeare—*Hamlet*.

Not that Donald was altogether set aside. It would have grieved the boy's affectionate heart if those who were in authority over him had even suggested such a thing. Only the "*literæ humaniores*," as we were taught to call them, were made to cede the place of honour to more practical studies. Donald, I believe, groaned over this revolutionary arrangement, but he could not deny its necessity under existing circumstances.

I think there could hardly ever have been a human being who excited so much love, with so little apparent effort, as Frederick Wells. In the quaint phrase of some old Scottish novel, that I remember reading when I was a boy, "His face was made of a fiddle, to which all men danced." I believe the great secret of this was, that, like the chameleon, he always took at least a shade of the colour of those with whom he conversed. It was not mere manner, still less was there the slightest tinge of hypocrisy in it.

Honestly and loyally the warm-hearted fellow threw himself into the character of

all who sought his sympathy. His eye would twinkle at Donald's most ponderous jokes, just as readily as he would listen with profound attention and interest to the wildest and most absurd legends of Betty's repertory—nay, he had on more than one occasion performed a feat, which none but he ever actually achieved, though many affected to do so—he had listened with real interest to the circumstantial narrative of good Mr. Tonkin's ailments—with all its “Ah, ah's” and “eh, eh's” and “said he's,” and “said I's.” Of him might be quoted in all truth a line often in Donald's mouth, when he praised him—

“Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto.”

With such a disposition as this, Frederick, it may readily be believed, was the light and life of our school. He had long since established a reputation for courage by soundly thrashing the greatest bully in the school, an overgrown lout, twice his own size; and it was well that he did this, for otherwise his extreme unwillingness to fight might have subjected him to a good deal of

impertinence. I remember once seeing him after having been teased and "squared at" for more than a quarter of an hour by a new boy, his equal in size and almost in strength, rise quietly from his seat, and seizing the offender by the waistband of his trousers, suspend him over a deep and filthy dusthole, until he roared for mercy.

Though good at all games, Frederick delighted most, I think, in quiet walks with his most intimate friends. Old as I am, my eyes fill with tears still, whenever I call to mind how he used to sit with Katherine and me of a summer's evening on some sunny bank, picking wild flowers and talking all the time of matters about which school-boys seldom trouble themselves. One of his favourite speculations was, what happened to the soul at the moment of its departure from the body. "I have often thought," he used to say, "that in the last struggle a wish to appear to some friend at a distance may be strong enough to bring about such an interview. Suppose, for instance," he used to say, half in joke, half in earnest, "you and I made an agreement, Jem, that he who

first dies should appear to the survivor ; is there anything ridiculous in supposing that the yearnings of a departing spirit may be powerful enough to place it for one moment in the presence of a dear friend ?”

Somehow I did not much like this sort of discourse, especially as Katherine, whose eyes were never once withdrawn from the speaker, used to turn almost as pale as one of the soulless forms about which we were speculating. So I tried as well as I could to laugh it off by begging him to answer for himself. *My* ghost, I said, at any rate, should never go on such a wild goose chase.

But neither Katherine nor myself could ever shake off a sort of vague uncomfortable feeling, that if Frederick died before us, we might perhaps be called on to meet his disembodied spirit face to face.

It was now certain that some time in the following spring he would be summoned to join his ship. So as it was the last Christmas that we were likely to spend together for a very long time, my mother was persuaded to relax her rule, and allow for once the Christmas players to perform in our

kitchen, the entertainment to be followed by a treat of saffron cakes and ale, of which the performers also were to partake.

Like the mummeries of more Eastern counties, the Christmas play was probably the remnant of some ancient rite, of which the record has perished long ago. At seven o'clock precisely a loud knock at our back door announced the arrival of the troop, the members of which were introduced by Betty, bearing a parti-coloured candle.

First there entered a very old man, bent almost double with age, and shivering and quaking as he walked. His snow-white hair and beard were twisted to represent icicles, and round his head was twined a wreath of ivy, varied with holly berries. This was "Father Christmas," who introduced himself to our acquaintance in the following doggerel, or something very like it :—

" Here comes I, old Father Christmas,
Welcome or welcome not ;
I hope old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot."

Then the light of Betty's candle was reflected back by what seemed the glitter of

polished steel, as she ushered in a stalwart knight, clad in something that did duty very respectably as complete armour.

This stately warrior announced himself in the following verse :—

“ Here stands I, St. George,
That knight of courage bold ;
If your blood is hot,
I'll quickly make it cold.

“ Draw out your sword and fight ;
Draw out your purse and pay ;
For satisfaction I will have
Before I go away.”

The adversary of this redoubted champion was an odd looking, undersized figure in a red jerkin and bright green stockings, who announced himself as “ little Man John.”

After a great deal of vapouring and sword-brandishing, the two heroes went to work, cutting at one another and parrying ; their swords all the while sending forth a fiery shower which recalled the memory of that terrible night when the coastguardmen fought with the shipwrecked smugglers on the beach at St. Vallery.

At length the smaller champion fell, and expired so naturally and gracefully, as to

elicit a general cry of "encore," or its Cornish equivalent, from the delighted audience, who would not be satisfied with anything short of a second decease, in which all the writhings and contortions of the first were repeated with the most laborious minuteness.

After this, there seemed some little inconsistency in the outcry for a doctor "to cure this deep and deadly wound," seeing that the patient was not only dead, but *twice* dead, lying on his back cold and stiff as his own sword. But we were anything but a critical audience, and with the exception of Richard, whom I heard muttering something that I did not understand, about "the unities," we were content to accept the whole thing as a portion of the legitimate drama.

The loudest of the little party who had thus clamoured for the resuscitation of the unfortunate "Man John," was the oddest figure that had yet appeared. It, for I hardly like to say "he," was apparently a cross between a man and a codfish, with a huge jolter head, so absurdly out of propor-

tion to his body that he looked like an exaggerated tadpole.

One eye, which was double the size of the other, rested with a fishy glare on the outstretched body of the dead warrior; the other, more its own master, as being a real eye of flesh and blood, rolled "in a fine frenzy" from floor to ceiling, and from ceiling back again to floor. His dress was, I believe, intended to represent a mixture of fishiness and humanity; the upper part being an ancient "Jack," or leathern coat, the lower a train covered with silvery scales, and ending in a fish's tail, which "wobbled" behind him as he walked the boards. Altogether, he *was* a queer object—a figure "pour rire," as the French say.

After a solemn progress from the door to the head of the room, he stood still, and fixing his *working* eye on my mother, announced himself as

"One who never was yet
With his great head and his little wit."

What his part in the drama was, or why he was brought on the stage at all, we never exactly understood, but certainly as a walk-

ing gentleman his get-up was perfect, and of all the performers not one was so warmly applauded as he.

The last character was the Doctor, dressed, I am ashamed to say, to represent exactly a worthy physician of the old school, who had been a practitioner in our town for forty years or more. There was no mistaking the intention of this actor; there was the powdered head, the pigtail, the shirt with its "chitterlings"—as the vulgar called the jabot, or lace frill, worn in those days—the gold-headed cane, the buckled shoes.

I believe our right course would have been to have kicked the vagabond out of the house at once, but when he began, as he did immediately on his entrance, to prescribe for the wounded man—voice, manner, nay even the very words, and the odd pronunciation of one or two of them, were so exactly the Doctor's, that dignity, propriety, sense of what was due to our old friend and to ourselves, all fled discomfited before the scamp's irresistible drollery. With the resuscitation of the dead warrior ended the principal piece.

Then, "by special desire and for this night only," as the "walking gentleman" informed us, we were entertained with a scene of Cornish life, in which young lads dressed up in bedgowns, short petticoats, and mob caps, and hats like coalheavers, played the part of two old women, an ill-used wife and her gossip. Stumping through the room, with a terrible clatter of pattens, they curtsayed after their country fashion to my mother, and began the performance.

FIRST OLD WOMAN.

Fath and troth, then, I b'leve in ten parishes round,
Sichey roage, sichey vellan, es not to be found!

SECOND OLD WOMAN.

What's the fussing long wetha* un Gracey, cheal vean ††

FIRST OLD WOMAN.

A fussing aketha‡ od splet es ould brain;
Our Martin's cum hum, cheeld, § so drunk as a bayst,
So cross as the gallish from Perranzan vayst.||

SECOND OLD WOMAN.

Never mind un, un Gracey-cheeld, put un to bed,
Let un slayp all the lequor away from hes head.

* Long wetha—along with ye.

† Lit. Little child, equivalent to the expression "old fellow," as applied to males.

‡ Aketha—quoth she.

§ Child.

|| Feast.

FIRST OLD WOMAN.

I udden go neast un* to fang the King's crown;
 For a swears, ef I spake t'un, aal clayve my skull down.
 Why ha'as skat ale to midjans and joud† for the nones‡
 A cloam buzza of scale milk§ about on the stones;
 And a catched up a shoul,|| for to steave me outright,
 But I run'd away ready to fainty wi' fright.

SECOND OLD WOMAN.

I know what I'd ge' en, ef sa be 'twere my case;
 I'd skat the ould chack's o' an¶ I'd trem un, un Grace.

FIRST OLD WOMAN.

I'm affeared a ma life to go nigh the ould vellan,
 Else, playse fayther,** I b'leve I should perfectly kill un—
 Why I maade for es supper a muggetty pie,
 But a shaant clunk a croom,†† ef a do lemmy‡‡ die.

SECOND OLD WOMAN.

I tould thee afore that the job was adone,
 That thees come to repent a'te, so sure as a gun;
 But thee wussent harken, un Gracey, for why?
 Bekase thee did'st knaw so much better than I.
 There's one of his pranks I shall always remember
 ('Twill be dree year ago, come the ighth o' November);
 I'd two purty young mabyers§§ as eyes cud behold,
 So fat as the butter, just iteen weeks ould.
 They was pecking about in the town-place||| for mayt,
 So I hove down some pellase¶¶ among um to ayt;
 When who but your man cum a-tottering along,
 So drunk that I thoft*** he wud fale in the dung;

* Neast un—Near him. † Broken all to bits and shivers.

‡ On purpose. § Earthenware pan of scald milk.

|| Shovel. ¶ Slap his old face. ** Vulgar oath.

†† Swallow a crumb. ‡‡ Let me.

§§ Pullet. ||| Farmyard. ¶¶ A sort of grain.

*** Thought.

A let fale hes hobban bag close to the door,
 Se I caled to the man, as one would to be shore.
 Says I, "Uncle Martin, cheeld, take up tha bag;"
 "Arrah (sezza*), whose that caling me dog."
 An a run'd forth towards me, nar better nar wuss,
 Nacked the mabyers both stef with a gurt more of fuss.†
 Like anow, ef I hadn't got hastesys away,
 A'd a done as a did by Jan Rouse t'other day;
 When a got in hes tantrums, a wilful ould devul,
 And slammed the poor man in the head with a kebbal.‡

FIRST OLD WOMAN.

When the cyder is run'd away every drap,
 'Tis too late to be thinkin' o' pluggin' the tap.
 And marriage must goo as the Loard do ordain;
 But if I'd knawed the coose§ aan, un Mally, cheal vean,
 If I'd knawed the coose aan but nine weeks ago,
 I'd never ha had the ould vellan, I know;
 But a vowed and a sweared that if I'd be his wife,
 I never should want ale the days of my life.
 And a broft|| me a nackin¶ and corn-save from Preen;**
 In ma conscience, thoft I, I shall live like a queen:
 But 'tis plagy provoking; ad splet hes ould head;
 To be pooted and slopped so—I wish a were dead.
 But I'll tame the ould vellan afore et es long;
 If a caant wi' my vistes,†† I will wi' my tongue.

At the conclusion of this dialogue, which was carried on in the Cornish patois, with the peculiar sing-song intonation of people

* Says he.

† Knocked the pullets both stiff with a great root of furze.

‡ Kebbal—a heavy iron-bound bucket used by miners.

§ Course—way of going on.

|| Brought.

¶ Handkerchief.

** Penryn.

†† Fists.

of that class in the mining districts, the performers curtseyed several times, and then, warmed I suppose by the plaudits of the audience, they began a jig in their pattens, the noise of which was so overwhelming, that if there had been any police worth mentioning in those days, I feel sure they would have entered the house to inquire "What was up?" As the only means of stopping them, my mother made signs to Betty to produce the saffron cakes and ale, to which champions, doctor, and old women, all did ample justice. As for the walking gentleman, after several vain attempts to make his fish-like mouth available for mastication, he divested himself of his head, disclosing thereby the somewhat heavy features of Mr. Tonkin's stable boy, who, as my reader may perhaps remember, succeeded so badly in his attempt to ride Ada. That event had not occurred yet, but as Frederick remarked, he looked just the sort of beggar who *would* ride, if you set him a-horseback.

The proceedings terminated by St. George rising, and in a really clever, though not very

refined speech, proposing the health of my mother and family—a proposal which “Little Man John” briefly seconded by grunting out “I says ditto to that.” The duty of replying of course devolved on Richard, who performed it very satisfactorily. As our guests seemed inclined to linger, Frederick, by way of hint, favoured us with a sentimental song, of which the refrain was “Good night, good night!”—a hint which was made intelligible to all by my mother’s rising and quitting the room, followed by Katherine.

So ended our Christmas party, which would have been a complete success but for one occurrence, which vexed us a good deal at the time, though we laughed at it afterwards. In her capacity of “Lucifera,” as Richard called her, Betty’s duty was to conduct the Christmas players to the door, as she had marshalled them into the banqueting hall. St. George had passed out, and Father Christmas was, as we supposed, in the act of following him, when a noise of scuffling was heard in the passage, followed by a sharp report, like the explosion of a

cracker. Re-enter Betty, with her cap awry, and some very suspicious marks on her face, which looked like red-ochre.

“Like his impudence!” she was beginning to exclaim, when all eyes were attracted to the door by the apparition of a wild figure, blazing—to compare small things with great—as Uncle Dick Rosewarne had blazed when he set fire to the brig. In the struggle with Betty in the passage, her parti-coloured Christmas-candle had caught the hoary locks and beard of the unfortunate representative of mid-winter ; which, for his misfortune, clung to his head like a tightly-fitting nightcap. The prompt assistance of Richard, who cut the string with cook’s scissors, prevented much damage being done, beyond the destruction of wig and whiskers, and a very slight burn; but the indirect results of the accident were more serious, for when the kitchen was clear it was discovered that a splendid ham, the gift of Mr. Tonkin, had disappeared in the confusion, by whom stolen it is impossible to say ; but I have always had my suspicions of the scamp who so basely, yet so cleverly carica-

20 AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CORNISH RECTOR.

tured our good old friend Dr. Sharp. Whoever it was, I had no worse wish for him than that expressed by Sydney Smith, when he took leave of Bishop Selwyn : " If a New Zealander *does* eat you, my dear Lord, *I trust that you will disagree with him.*"

CHAPTER II.

"Her guerdon yet hath Cornwall won
In many a brave heroic son ;
From those who wore the hoary crown,
The car-borne chiefs of old renown ;
To those who strewed with rebel dead
Th' ensanguined field where Granville bled."

POLWHEEL.

FREDERICK WELLS was now a full midshipman ; and very proud we were of the impression which his appearance in the quaint uniform of the period made on high and low, as he walked the streets of our town. Even our old antagonists, the roughs of O'Rourke's academy, who could hardly pass any of us without a sneer more or less pronounced, now gazed with as much respect as they were capable of feeling for anybody or anything in the world, on the naval officer, whose gold-laced hat and dirk proclaimed him of a rank which none of them could ever hope to attain.

Possibly, after years of hard service before the mast, some of them might end by covering their grey heads with the hat of a warrant officer, or, what they liked much better, might, if they had the good fortune to escape the press-gang, walk the quarter-deck of a tight craft of which they were part owners. But higher than this they never aspired : for it was a thing unheard of that a lad of the O'Rourke type should obtain a commission in His Majesty's service, except perhaps now and then in the Marines, a corps which in those days stood much lower in public estimation—I never could make out why—than it does at present.

It had been arranged that we should accompany our old schoolfellow to Falmouth, where Admiral Reynolds lay ; and if it were permitted by the higher powers, should exchange our last greetings on the deck of the ship which would probably be his home for years. The poor old General, far too feeble to think of taking such a journey, was fain to stand at his own door, waving his handkerchief to us, as long as we continued in sight, whilst the two "young ladies," as his

old servants always called the maiden aunts, sent their blessing in the shape of a pair of fowls, a ham, and a magnificent saffron cake—an arrangement which, I suspect, consoled our friend wonderfully for the absence of his relatives.

My mother and Katherine had preceded us, under the escort of Donald, who was determined to see the last of the “bairn,” as he called him. At Falmouth we were joined by a widow lady, an old friend of my mother’s, whose son was just landing, wounded, sea-worn, and half-starved, from the transport which had brought him away from the blood-stained ramparts of Corunna. By her side stood a young lady in deep mourning, the daughter of a distant relative. Poor Mary Tressillian! she might well look sad; for hardly more than a month before the time of which I am writing, the death of her last surviving parent had left her an orphan, with not a relation in the world except good Mrs. Penrose. But even this hardly accounted for the wild, anxious expression of her eyes, or the nervous twitching of her mouth, which those who

stood near her could not fail to observe whenever she withdrew her gaze for a moment from the shore boat, which was now rapidly nearing the landing-place.

In the stern-sheets sat a young man in the ragged uniform of a light infantry officer, his arm in a scarf, and his face so haggard and colourless, that if our heads had had any room in them for poetical thoughts at such a moment, we might have likened him to a shade taking its last passage in the boat of the Stygian ferryman. There were two others with him, much older men, whose well-knit frames showed fewer traces of the hardships which all had undergone alike in that disastrous retreat and the subsequent voyage.

Leaping lightly ashore the moment the boat's keel grazed the hard, they waved farewell to their less fortunate comrade, and in less than five minutes were seated side by side on the roof of the Exeter mail, *en route* for the distant midland county where all their belongings were. It was a work of some difficulty to get poor Henry Penrose ashore, though the rough old boatmen

handled him as tenderly as any hospital nurses could have done ; but the first attempt to walk wrung from him a groan, almost a shriek, which coming from a man, and he a soldier, told of agony too great almost for endurance. Neither he nor his mother spoke a word whilst the litter was preparing on which the boatmen were to carry him to the nearest hotel. When at last he was stretched on it, his head supported by two or three pillows which the landlady of the King's Arms had sent down to the landing-place, the living and the dead—so it seemed to us, he lay so still—moved on side by side, the mother never letting go for a moment her clasp of the thin white hand, which hung helplessly over the side. A surgeon who awaited him at the hotel, after dressing his wounded arm and administering an opiate, left him to a sleep which lasted nearly eight hours, during the whole of which Mrs. Penrose sat by the bedside, listening to his breathing, as regular as that of a wearied child, and never withdrawing her eyes from the pale peaceful face. Once, and only once, Mary Tressillian, who watched

on the other side of the bed, heard her murmur, she told us afterwards, a few words; they were words of comfort to her, as in another sense they have been and will be yet to thousands. "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found."

We saw nothing of him until the next day, when we were all allowed to sit with him for half an hour, to hear the story of his adventures. He was still very pale and languid, but a sound night's rest and tender treatment had had their due effect in removing the appearance of excessive exhaustion which had so alarmed us the day before. He was now half-sitting, half-lying on a sofa, propped up by pillows, and evidently enjoying a luncheon which old Mrs. Penberthy, the landlady of the hotel, had brought up with her own motherly hands. Poor old soul! she had had her share of soldiering in her days, she told us, for husband and son had fallen side by side years ago, when Lord Nelson bombarded Copenhagen.

"Victu revocat vires," quoth Donald, who had been watching with affectionate

interest the very satisfactory performance of his old pupil : and on this hint the wounded man, placing his watch on the table, like a speaker at a missionary meeting, began the story of his military experience.

“ My letters have told you,” he said, “ mother dear, all that is worth knowing, and mayhap a great deal more, about our landing in Spain, to join Sir John Moore’s division. So I wont go over that tiresome old ground again, but start at once with the last battle, which ended in our coming back from Corunna. It would save me some little cost of breath if Richard would begin the performance by reading a page or so of the best account that exists of that unfortunate affair. I got it from a friend, who hoped, he told me, at some future time to place it in the hands of a very experienced officer, who had often mentioned at mess his intention of publishing a history of the whole Peninsular War :”—

“ As the troops approached Corunna, the General’s looks were directed towards the harbour, but not a sail was to be seen, the transports being detained by contrary winds

at Vigo. The men were now put into quarters in the town and suburbs. For twelve days they had covered the retreat, traversing eighty miles in two marches, had passed several nights under arms in the snow of the mountains, were seven times engaged with the enemy, and had now, thanks to their good discipline, fewer men missing from their ranks than any other division of the army.

“In the meantime, the enemy came gradually up and occupied the great ridge enclosing the British position, placing their right on the intersection of the roads leading from S. Iago and Batangos, and their left upon a rocky eminence which overlooked both lines. The English general had hoped that by a quiet retreat he might reach his ships unmolested, and carry his army to the southern provinces, which he might reach by sea in a few days, though six weeks of marching would not bring the French army from Galicia into that neighbourhood. Those provinces had as yet scarcely seen an enemy, and there, too, was the seat of Government. But the late arrival of the trans-

ports, the foremost of which entered the bay just as the French were taking up their position on the heights, the increasing force of the enemy, and the disadvantageous nature of the ground, rendered the embarkation all but impracticable. The proposal by some of his general officers to treat with the enemy was indignantly rejected by Sir John Moore.”*

“To be sure it was!” chimed in the wounded man. “Dear old fellow! I don’t think he knew what the words meant. Catch old Johnny Moore negotiating, as they call it, as long as his men had a charge in their cartouche-boxes—nor even when that was gone, unless their bayonets had been broken short off at the socket—a thing not very likely to happen, I should say. We were weary enough, mother, you may well believe—shoeless, most of us, and our clothes something in the style that you admired so much in the elegant suit that I wore when I landed yesterday; but there was not a man of us that would not have died ten times

* See Napier’s “History of the Peninsular War.”

over rather than exchange a word in the way of capitulation with those French beggars. So to work we went once more—ay, and drove them back, too, at the bayonet's point. But in doing this we lost one of our generals, Sir David Baird, and what was a much greater grief to me—for I hardly knew the General by sight—poor Edward Edgcumbe, my old chum, who, you remember, sailed with me from Plymouth to join the army, was carried to the rear at the same moment. I suppose he had some life left in him then, for they would hardly have taken all that trouble for a dead man; but when they made up the list his name was among the killed. You remember Reginald Trevanion, too, don't you?—the young scamp who went and 'listed for a soldier, and so forced his father to buy him a commission, instead of sending him to Oxford. He was the life of our mess, the merriest, happiest fellow that ever lived, and sadly we missed him when we were knocking about in that filthy transport."

"Mary, my dear," said Mrs. Penrose, interrupting the speaker, "put on your bonnet

and run down at once to the druggist's. He ought to have sent your cousin's cordial draught an hour ago. I am almost afraid he will faint—he looks so pale.”

“Henry,” she said, as soon as the poor trembling girl had closed the door behind her, “what you are, I am sure, about to tell us must never reach Mary’s ears, if we can help it. Until yesterday I never had any idea that she cared about Reginald Trevanion. I was not even sure that she knew him. But yesterday, when you were landing from the transport, I could not help observing how anxiously she looked out for the return of one who never came, and the expression of her face when you spoke just now of your missing him on board your vessel, told the rest plainly enough. Poor, poor Mary!”

“Well, mother,” said Henry, “it mayn’t be as bad as you think for, after all. For anything I know to the contrary, Reggie Trevanion may be more alive than I am at this present moment. All that I can tell you is, that on our last march, he went into a roadside cottage to beg a draught of water,

and—never came out—at least, to my knowledge. But I had no time to look after him, or to think of anything else except the French vagabonds, who were beginning to stir again, like angry bees in a hive.

“Well, to go back to where I left off. Whilst we were at it, hammer-and-tongs, as that vulgar fellow, Richard, would say, something covered with a horseman’s cloak was carried slowly to the rear. At that distance we could just make out a very pale face, and what looked like grey hairs. Later in the day, we heard that the wounded man was Sir John Moore himself, who had been struck by a cannon-ball as he cheered the 42nd Highlanders to the charge.

“They told us that the shot had driven the hilt of his sword into his side, but that he refused to have it removed, saying he and his sword should be carried off the field together. We buried him that night on the ramparts of the town, whilst the guns of the enemy were still roaring in the distance. Well, mother, my story is pretty nearly ended now. Those who could walk tumbled aboard the transports in a style

that made the Jack Tars roar with laughter, those who could not were hoisted in with as little discomfort as circumstances allowed—and that is not saying much, I give you my word.

“The nastiness and starvation and general beggarliness of those filthy little tubs had better not be described, mother. If you heard it, I don’t think you would ever eat your dinner again in any comfort. I suppose I saw less of it than some of our fellows did, but quite enough to sicken me.”

Here the watch on the table warned us that time was up, so without a word more on either side, we were hurried out of the room. Within an hour we were all, with the exception of the wounded man and his belongings, standing together on the deck of the *St. George*, “speeding the parting guest,” as we had a few hours before “welcomed the coming.”

Frederick bore the separation bravely, as we all knew he would, but an occasional sniff from Richard sounded awkwardly, though he tried to cover it by chaffing my mother and Katherine for crying

because they had been whipped, the tackle by which their chair was hoisted on board being called a "whip." It was a very mild joke: but it made them both smile, which was all that he wanted. As for me nobody cared whether I laughed or cried; so I snivelled to my heart's content. On landing we met Mary Tressillian, who brought us Mrs. Penrose's farewells and a kind message from Henry, to the effect that he was too much exhausted to talk any more that day, but sent us a heap of loves and kind wishes.

So ended our Falmouth expedition—a sad one enough, all things considered. Most of all, I think, we sympathized with Mary Tressillian, whom maidenly modesty withheld from imparting to any one a grief which the uncertainty of her lover's fate rendered harder to bear than it would have been if she had known at once that there was no place for hope. She went about as usual, except that day by day she grew paler and thinner, developing little by little, as their medical man told Mrs. Penrose, the seeds of the same

fatal disease that had made her an orphan. Her only pleasure, almost her only employment now, except her Sunday school, was visiting two or three bedridden soldiers who had been sent home from Portugal unfit for further service. Hour after hour she would sit by their bedsides, listening to their stories of the war—above all, trying to make them talk of comrades who to their certain knowledge had been returned as “missing,” and yet had turned up safe and sound. They had known many such cases, they said—I believe they invented most of them, as soon as they guessed the poor girl’s secret, and marked how her eye brightened as she listened to their tales. Poor fellows! they were not very exact moralists, and thought there could not be much harm in a lie that gave so much pleasure to one who was kinder to them than any one had ever been before.

But the time was not all spent in such talk. Always, before she took leave of her pensioners, Mary would open her Bible and read to them of the soldiers of the cross in the olden time, and of Him whom they

called their Captain—how they fought under His banner against the legions of the Great Enemy, and in His strength were more than conquerors.

Then she would tell them in her simple way how this Mighty Warrior still enlisted men under His banner, and how He could make the feeblest and the most faint-hearted among them brave and steadfast—ay, and would lead them on to certain victory if they would only let Him.

Two of these men have long since passed away, but there is in my parish a grey head that I never miss from morning and evening service, and rarely from the Holy Table—an old tottering man, who tells me that whatever of good there is in him, he owes, under God, to the dear young lady whose grave he never fails to visit when he goes, four times a year, to report himself at Truro.

But I must not dwell any longer on these sad memories. I am sure they were driven out of our minds soon enough in those days by the stir and din of a struggle that seemed to be going on at our very doors. And then we had excitement of a higher kind still,

when from time to time a post-chaise and four would dash furiously down the hill that led into our town on the Falmouth side, and pale, war-worn men, who alighted for a moment whilst they changed horses, would tell the crowd that gathered round them that Wellington had been again victorious. Those were the days of bonfires, and roasted oxen, and brass bands. I think our lives were little else than a long "demonstration."

We were very loyal and very fairly respectable, all things considered; but once our character was very nearly shipwrecked by the scandalous behaviour of one of our leading tradesmen.

A chaise had stopped at the hotel door, bearing, in addition to the usual decorations of laurel branches and ribbons, something bright and glittering, that looked in the distance, as it hung out of one of the windows, like a glorified barn-door fowl. How we shouted when an old soldier, who happened to be in the crowd, explained to us that this queer-looking bird was a French eagle, the highest order of standard known in their service.

There must have been root-and-branch

work this time, he said, for the Mounseers, whatever else they were, were as brave as lions, and would never have parted with *that* standard as long as there lived a man to defend it. He had seen that tried more than once, when their veterans had cut their way through our red-coats, losing half a dozen men at every step, but carrying off their eagle safe and sound. No—it was all up with them when *that* was taken.

It was curious to watch the faces of the townsmen as they listened to this discourse, trying all the while to decipher the few words of French that were emblazoned on the eagle's perch, and speculating on the meaning of the mystical letter N and all its strange accompaniments.

I think it must have been a sort of sickly sentimentalism rather than any actually dishonest impulse that led the unfortunate Mr. Peter Tresidder to cut off and pocket one of the bullion-tassels of the standard.

One thing, at any rate, is certain, that there were sharp eyes watching him all the time, and plenty of eager voices ready to open upon him in full cry the moment the

theft was detected. In less than ten minutes a blanket was procured from a neighbouring mercer's shop, and the unhappy delinquent being placed therein, was tossed again and again, until the sturdy roughs who held its corners left off from actual exhaustion.

Poor fellow ! he looked pale enough under this discipline ; so, in order to revive him, buckets of water, drawn from the nearest pump, were dashed over his head and shoulders so profusely, that, like Moore's Epicurean, he seemed in no little danger of being demolished by the power of two dangerous elements. However, he got clear of them at last, thinking, no doubt, that the worst was over. But this was by no means the view that his self-constituted judges took of the case.

The sun had set, and most of the tradesmen had closed their shops—for we were early birds in those days—when a disorderly rabble appeared in front of Mr. Tresidder's house, bearing in their midst a heavy mass of timber, which turned out to be a gallows, from which dangled a figure dressed up to represent the delinquent. Around its neck

was suspended the tassel which they had taken possession of in the morning, and under it, on the figure's breast, was sewn a paper scrawled over with doggerel verses, something to this effect:—

“Foul of face and black of heart,
Scoundrel, worse than Bony-part;
Caitiff wretch ! dishonoured name,
Soiler of thy country's fame—
Before thy judges now appear—
Stand at the bar thy doom to hear.”

By way of emphasizing this summons, a shower of stones, hurled by the mob, fell crashing through the front windows, demolishing, as we afterwards heard, most of his furniture and stock-in-trade.

An invitation to show himself, backed by such arguments as these, was not likely to command much attention. To own the truth, even if there had been the will to come forward, the way was a-wanting, for ever since his dismissal by his first persecutors, Mr. Tresidder had at intervals been drinking himself drunk in his back parlour, and was now incapable even of rising from his chair, much less of bringing forward any plea in arrest of judgment.

At this stage of the proceedings, a wild-looking figure whom we recognised as a half-witted buyer and seller of rabbit-skins, was hoisted on the shoulders of the crowd to publish the sentence of the court.

They had stripped him of all his upper raiment, except his shirt, which was painted blood-red, as emblematical of their sanguinary intentions. His head was decorated with a huge lop-sided cocked hat, on the top of which was perched a bundle of feathers, intended, we were told, to represent the French eagle. Clearing his voice, as far as such a voice could be cleared, with two or three hems, this strange pursuivant read from a paper the following sentence:—

“ O Yes—O Yes—O Yes—Forasmuch as Peter Tresidder, oilman and dealer in earthenware, a freeman of this Borough, has treated with contempt a summons of this Court to appear before it and plead to an indictment charging him with *léze-majesty*” (this bit of legal jargon was evidently the contribution of a lawyer’s clerk of indifferent character whom we recognised in front of the mob), “ and with divers and sundry other

crimes and misdemeanours—therefore we do, in the name and on behalf of our fellow townsmen, proceed to pass on him *per contumacium*, the sentence of the law; which is, that his body be hung by the neck until he is dead, and then cut down and thrown into the fire. But inasmuch as the said body is not under present circumstances *come-at-able*, we further decree that the hanging and burning of his effigy, here present, shall be deemed in law to all intents and purposes equivalent to the hanging and burning of the said Peter Tresidder in the flesh. ‘GOD SAVE THE KING.’ ”

The procession then moved on to the rough music of horns and frying-pans, playing, we were told, the Rogue’s March. On reaching a field at the outskirts of the town, preparations for the execution were made by transferring the effigy to a gallows of more imposing height. Then the lawyer’s clerk delivered an oration, remarkable, as well as I remember, for nothing except the well-merited disgrace and ruin that it brought on himself as soon as his employers became aware of his misconduct.

The burning of the figure in a perfect volcano of squibs and crackers terminated the performance as far as the public were concerned. But for poor Tresidder there was further humiliation in store. He bore it as long as he could, but the annoyance to which he was subjected in the daubing the white front of his house with representations in red ochre of eagles and tassels, and the cries of "Peter Tossel" that were sure to hail him whenever he crossed his threshold, wore out his patience at last.

Happily for him he had realized a comfortable little fortune, so he sold his business to his foreman and disappeared from among us.

What became of him afterwards we never heard, unless, as was not unlikely, he was identical with a certain "Señor Don Pedro Tresidero," whom a Mexican paper, brought home from that country by one of our shipmasters, described as "hombre muy honrado y estimado,"* who had earned the gratitude of his adopted country by discharging a portion of her national debt.

* A man greatly honoured and respected.

An invitation to the "Furry day" at Helstone came very seasonably at this time, for the glimpse which we had had of the stern realities of war had shaken my poor mother's nerves so terribly as to render a change of some sort or other absolutely necessary.

The origin of this celebration, which derives its name from the old Cornish word *fer*, a fair or festival, must be sought, antiquarians tell us, in the religious rites with which our heathen ancestors welcomed the return of Spring. So strictly was it kept, when I was a boy, that any attempt to work on that day was sure to be visited with prompt and very energetic manifestations of displeasure on the part of the townsmen.

The fête commenced at daybreak with ringing of the church bells, the sounds of which mingled oddly with the clang and clash of frying-pans and kettles and the braying of tin trumpets and bullocks' horns.

As these sounds died away, we heard in the distance the strains of the furry song, of which I only remember two verses, sung

times, he would have liked better, I dare say, to be

“Seeking the bubble reputation,
E'en in the cannon's mouth.”

But the separation would have broken my mother's heart, so the idea of entering the army, if ever seriously entertained, was soon abandoned. I suspect his decision was in some degree influenced by our old schoolfellow, Henry Penrose, who played in a respectable way the part of the drunken Helot in the old Spartan discipline. Whether his wound had been originally more severe than any of us had suspected, or had been probed and hacked and cauterized by a conceited, ignorant surgeon until the bone became carious, I cannot tell; but so it was, that instead of abating its fury, the fire burnt on day after day with an intensity that threatened to dry up the springs of the poor fellow's life. A long journey in those days was a far more tedious as well as costly affair than it is now; but for Henry's sake, Mrs. Penrose determined to face all its inconveniences—ay, and even dangers—for that universal medicine, the hangman's rope, had not as

yet quite purged out the race of highway-men—and to seek in London such surgical aid as none of the provinces could afford. The surgeon whom they consulted, a grey-headed old man, who had himself lost a son in the Peninsula, told them at once, though very cautiously and tenderly, that life could only be preserved by the sacrifice of the patient's arm. He might linger on in misery for months—years possibly—but the tortured, hopeless life, must be terminated, sooner or later, by an agonizing death. What the result of an operation would be, it was impossible to foretell; "but if you were my own son," here the old man's lip quivered, "I would," he said, "use all the authority of a father to induce you to submit to the operation. Your youth and general soundness of body afford a fair prospect of success. God grant that it may be realized!"

As no objections were raised to this proposal, either by Henry or his mother, the operation was performed the next day. It must have been painful enough, for chloroform had not yet been invented; but the wound healed with a rapidity that astonished

even the surgeon himself, and in a very few weeks Henry Penrose was seated once more by his mother's side on the old bench in front of their house at Truro, fighting over again the battle in which he had won immortal glory and a pension of three-and-sixpence a day, regularly paid. It was a dreary, purposeless life at first, for the loss of his right arm rendered active work impossible; but by degrees he found out little employments for himself, helping Mary in her ministrations to the poor, teaching at the Sunday school, and so forth. He is still alive, a stout veteran, though slightly bent with age, the same kind, genial creature as ever; at peace with himself and with all the world, awaiting cheerfully and hopefully the summons to a home more peaceful still.

Of Frederick Wells we received accounts now and then through the old General and his daughters. Life seemed to him a pleasure trip, the interest of which was kept up by perpetual change of scene. He had been to the West Indies, where he had seen real live niggers and eaten cocoa-nuts fresh

gathered, and oranges and bananas ; then he had cruised in the Mediterranean, where he had actually anchored in the Piræus, of which we used to read in Lemprière's Dictionary in the old school days ; and more than that, he had passed the ever-burning mountain of Stromboli, the scene, according to Betty, of " Old Booty's " apparition to the crew and master of a merchantman some time or other in the last century.* Once he had been engaged in actual fight ; but unfortunately it had been only with a plucky little brig, which returned the ship's fire gallantly, until the rising sun

* The person here mentioned was a marine-store dealer in Wapping, who was well known to seafaring men as a purchaser of pay-warrants, a trade which afforded facilities for extensive and almost unquestioned plunder. On his return to England the shipmaster found that the date of the old man's death corresponded exactly with that of an entry made in his log of the apparition mentioned in the text—a circumstance which he seems to have communicated to most of his friends. Being prosecuted for defamation of character, he subpoenaed the whole ship's company, who swore that on the day and hour aforesaid, when lying becalmed off the Lipari Islands, they had seen " Old Booty," or something in his likeness, chased round and round by a dark figure, who hurled him at last into the pit of the volcano. On the strength of this evidence, the jury, it is said, returned a verdict for the defendant.

disclosed the mortifying fact that the little vessel, whose night-signals they had been unable to make out, was neither more nor less than one of our own Falmouth packets.

Happily the darkness of the night prevented much mischief being done on either side: but for a long time the misadventure was a prohibited subject in the ward-room; of course no such restriction could be imposed on the reefers, who laughed and cackled and wrote home about it to their friends, all the more freely for knowing that the subject was distasteful to their superior officers.

Their next station, the knowing ones said, would be the Baltic, but of this Frederick knew nothing, except what he heard from lads hardly better informed on such subjects than himself. He cared little about it, he said: there was fun to be had wherever they went, only it *would* be jolly if they could get there in time to see the sun shining at midnight, instead of having to shut up shop at three in the afternoon, as he did in those latitudes in winter.

He loved his profession better then ever; there were only two things in the world that he wanted now, to have a real good brush with the "Johnny Crapauds," and to see his old grandfather and all of us once again, if only for a week—the brush first if possible, that he might have the story of a victory to tell us, then

" All hands ahoy to the anchor
From friends and relations to go ;

as we reefers sing every Saturday night."

Our town had, as I have said, returned to its normal condition of "deadly liveliness." The Volunteers were a sorry substitute for the real warriors who used to throng our streets in all the bravery of gold and fur and clanking swords, almost every other week.

The only remnant of the good old times was a troop of Inniskillen dragoons, who occupied our cavalry barracks: but they had been with us so long that we had almost begun to reckon them among our fixtures—a sort of higher order of yeomanry. They were fine fellows nevertheless; men who only waited for an opportunity of proving,

as they did afterwards in many a hard-fought field, that they were second to none. But we boys could not look forward beyond the present moment. All that we knew from our own experience seemed to sanction the idea, that except for the pleasure that the sight of their officers afforded us in their blue-and-gold uniforms, and the usefulness of some two or three of them in eking out the whist and quadrille parties of our old ladies, they might as well have gone home to Ireland or anywhere else.

Their grandest display was on Sundays, when they marched in all the pride of military array to St. Mary's Church, where an entire aisle was placed at their disposal. They had seated themselves there one Sunday morning as usual, and the service was just beginning, when a lady, who had very recently come to our town as a bride, walked unhesitatingly into the midst of them and took her seat as unconcernedly as if it had been her own pew. For a long time she worshipped very composedly, standing and kneeling in concert with her neighbours, without a suspicion apparently that they

were all of one sex. But at last—it was, I think, in the middle of the First Lesson—this terrible fact seems to have presented itself to her mind. Those who were near her saw at once that something was wrong, and civilly made way for her escape, which she effected under the escort of a grey-whiskered serjeant-major, and of her own husband, who met her at the entrance of the aisle. He had thought it best not to interfere until that moment lest, as he phrased it, “he should make bad worse.” She was a literary lady of some little distinction, and a good Christian woman too as ever lived: but her absence of mind on some occasions was almost beyond belief. One instance of it her husband, I remember, who was a bit of a humorist, told to a few select friends who didn’t scruple to give it publicity. He had gone down one morning to the breakfast room, leaving his wife to follow, when, after reading a page of the *Times* and finding himself still alone, he thought it might be as well, knowing her infirmity, to remind her that a quarter of an hour had elapsed since he left his dressing-room and that the

tea was getting cold. The reply to this intimation was—he chuckled as he repeated it—a loud and distinct “Amen.” She had somehow or other mixed up her husband’s announcement with the prayer that she was repeating.

Mr. Richards said that her eccentricities reminded him of a clergyman whom he had known in his younger days—a man whose absence of mind was a never-failing source of amusement to the “bucks” as they were called of that period. Once having been appointed by his Bishop to preach the Visitation Sermon, he had provided himself with three discourses suitable to the occasion, as prudent boatmen carry spare oars in case of accident.

Unfortunately these sermons were left for a few moments on the table of one of our hotels, whilst Mr. Harvest sought a private interview with his diocesan. On entering the pulpit, he became aware of a fact that would have covered any other human being with confusion, that what he believed to be a single discourse had swollen to thrice its original thickness. But the discovery

affected him so little, that after the usual "bidding" prayer, he gave out his text in a firm voice and continued to declaim with great emphasis, until at the end of an hour and three-quarters the clerk came to tell him, that they "had all gone out," the Bishop bringing up the rear.

This strange occurrence was alluded to good-humouredly by the kind-hearted prelate when after dinner he proposed the health of their preacher, with thanks for his "remarkable" sermon.

So far from being downcast or out of countenance at this hit, Harvest, in returning thanks, favoured his reverend brethren with a few other instances of his besetting infirmity: how he was once found by a friend boiling his watch and gazing intently on an egg, which he held in his hand; how at a large dinner-party he had been covered with confusion at finding a table-napkin on his knee, supposing it to be a portion of his own body linen, which had escaped illicitly from its prison; how his celibacy was the unhappy result of his having gone a fishing instead of to church on the day fixed for

his marriage—thereby causing a breach between himself and his *fiancée* which was never repaired. It was a hopeless case, he told them; most of his life had been spent in trying to overcome his infirmity. At fifty-five it was too late to expect success, so he let things take their course.

It had been decided—whether wisely or not I hardly know—that previously to my entering at Exeter I should have a year or two, as the case might be, at Rugby, to perfect me in my Greek, which certainly wanted a good deal of touching up. My mother's adviser in this matter was the Curate of St. Mary's, a very accomplished scholar, as scholars went in those days, and a man of unblemished character, but eccentric to the verge of insanity. In person he resembled the late Lord Brougham, or rather the venerated John Keble, the space between his shoulders being the narrowest part of his body, which, to own the truth, was as meagre throughout as that of a weasel. He was always clad in a full suit of black, rigidly clerical, even to the long gaiters that encased his legs. Behind the

silver-rimmed spectacles that he always wore, even in bed, as the vulgar believed, flashed a pair of black eyes, so bright that without that toning down they would, we all thought, have scorched the face of any one on whom he fixed them, like a burning-glass.

Such was the Reverend Jeremiah Wilkins, a gentleman whose complicated oddities had always stood in the way of his preferment; but a ripe scholar, as I have said; and what was much better, a man whom all respected as a laborious parish priest, a kind neighbour, and the warmest of friends within the little circle that he honoured with his especial intimacy. I seem to see him now, as I used to see him more than fifty years ago, hurrying home from the county library, his hands and pockets full of books, and his black stick thrust under his arm so as to give it the appearance of a tail. He had a curious habit of placing his finger and thumb on his forehead when he spoke, and prefacing the most indisputable remarks with the words "I think."

I remember his once telling me that he "thought" he had been that morning at a neighbouring village burying an old friend and fellow-collegian. I believe if any one had asked him whether he was alive or not, he would have replied that he "thought" he was.

The only unamiable weakness that we ever detected in him was a violent and unreasonable prejudice against poor Donald. I believe the Greek particle was at the bottom of the original dispute, which was carried on year after year with a bitterness worthy of German critics.

I need hardly say that in this discussion the advantage was unmistakeably on the side of the Curate. Blunder after blunder was exposed in letters to the editor of our Tory paper, and generally made more palpable by Donald's reply. Happily not one in fifty of their readers possessed Greek enough to comprehend the questions at issue between them. Had it been otherwise, Donald's occupation would, I fear, have "gone," like Othello's. As it was, however, I think the balance of public

opinion was in favour of the smooth Scotchman, whose courtesy contrasted favourably with the rough-and-ready style of his adversary.

Even the acknowledgment that he was vanquished at last, wrung from him by a reference to the Æolic digamma, of which he had never heard in his life, rather raised than lowered him in public estimation, so dignified was its tone.

“Do manus,” the article began, “I surrender; but before I withdraw from this contest, let me entreat my opponent’s pardon for any breach of courtesy which I may have inadvertently committed, and assure him that in spite of some harsh and unjust expressions forced from me in the heat of controversy, I have ever respected him as a gentleman, a devoted Christian minister, and a

“‘Foeman worthy of my steel.’

Next to having vanquished him, I deem it to be the highest honour to lower my broken sword before one so distinguished.”

Jeremiah’s reply was kind and conci-

liatory, though a trifle rougher in style than that of his late adversary.

And so the warfare ended, and with it, I verily believe, every remnant of unfriendly feeling on either side; but the Curate's opinion of the schoolmaster's Greek, unfavourable from the first, never underwent any change, though he shrank now from giving it expression, except in those rare instances where silence would, according to his views, have been criminal.

Such a case was ours. He and my mother were friends of many years' standing, and from him she naturally enough sought advice in most of her difficulties. Greatly as she respected Donald, and terribly as she dreaded any change in addition to the inevitable transfer of my person from school to college, she had yet certain misgivings, originally implanted in her mind by Jeremiah himself, that the system of our grammar-school might not, after all, be exactly in accordance with that pursued at Oxford. Mr. Wilkins' reply to her inquiries on this head was plain and unmistakeable enough.

“Certainly not,” he said; “you might as well send a lad to a linendraper to prepare him for an examination before the College of Surgeons as keep him hammering on at the grammar-school with the expectation that he would ever be qualified for Oxford. Send the lad to Rugby, Mrs. Tregenna, next year, and I tell you what I will do. I will give him a lesson in Greek every other evening, so that he may look less like a fool when he comes to stand before the Head Master than he would do if he got no better instruction than poor Fraser’s. I am an ‘old Rugbeian’ myself, so I know pretty well what they require there. Think it over for a few days, consult anybody you like, and then let me know the result.”

The result was of course what he anticipated. Donald was informed, kindly and delicately, that his system, excellent as it was, was a training for a Scotch rather than an English University. There were certain peculiarities of style, and so forth, which my mother was advised could only be learnt from a teacher who had himself studied at Oxford or Cambridge. Would

Dr. Fraser object to my spending the last year of my pupilage at Rugby instead of at Truro?

The manner in which Donald received a proposal which many men would have resented relieved my mother from any further embarrassment.

As it used to be said of a late Bishop of London, under whose rule I passed some of the best years of my working life, I do not think he knew what petty jealousy meant. Not only did he acquiesce cheerfully in the proposed arrangement, but even went so far as to suggest that we should, if possible, get Mr. Wilkins to supplement his instruction by a few occasional lessons in Greek. As Jeremiah had himself proposed such a plan already, there was no occasion for "sounding" him, as the Doctor suggested, so the new system was inaugurated at once.

Never in my life did I work so hard as in those few months. Whether my strength was unequal to the burden which, from actual inability to comprehend the depth and breadth of my ignorance, Jeremiah laid on me, or whether, as was more likely, the

dread of discomfiture stung my usually placid spirit into feverish activity—whatever was the cause, I am sure the result was just as I have described it.

From “morn till dewy eve,” and from “dewy eve” almost to morn again, I sat at my studies with little rest, except during my hurried meals and the time occupied in going to and fro between my two preceptors.

The effect of this strain on the nervous system was not slow in showing itself. I grew paler and thinner day by day. Sometimes my head ached so fiercely as to render work impossible for hours together. More or less I quarrelled with everybody with whom I had any communication. A more disagreeable lad than I was in those days could hardly, I think, have existed.

In vain did our old family apothecary prescribe everything but that which was essential to my recovery—perfect rest for a time. He was too stupid to find out that hard work was the cause of all the evil. So he went on feeling my pulse, looking at my tongue, and punching my liver, sending in all the time basketsful of mixtures, of

which the effect would not have been very salutary, I suspect, even if I had taken them.

As it was, I did not give them a chance, for as fast as they were brought to our house, I handed them over to the apothecary's boy, whose mother carried on a flourishing trade in rags and bottles a few doors off.

To add to my troubles the Bishop had given notice of a Confirmation in the autumn of that year, at which both Mr. Wilkins and my mother wished me to offer myself as a candidate, such opportunities being much rarer then than they are now-a-days. I dreaded the interruption of my studies, which the necessary preparation would be sure to cause; but independently of higher considerations, I am by no means sure that the change of thought did not act as a tonic for a while, though the return to the old drudgery soon neutralized its effect. In my poor way I strove very hard to prepare myself for an ordinance which I had always been taught to regard with reverence. Mr. Wilkins had given me a book of private

devotion, which I read whenever I had a few minutes at my disposal. To him I was indebted also for a better acquaintance than most of my contemporaries with the history of the Holy rite, and for a knowledge of the grounds on which the believer expects spiritual benefit from its due reception. Happily for my peace of mind, he had taught me, too, the doctrine so strongly insisted on by our Church in her Twenty-sixth Article, that "the unworthiness of the minister hindereth not the effect of the Sacraments."* Otherwise I might perhaps have been tempted to doubt the efficacy of a rite administered by the majestic prelate whose snow-white hands, glittering with rings, were placed on my head, while in a voice of the sweetest tone, and in measured accents, he prayed that God would defend me with his grace, that I might continue His for ever. He was the last of a class of dignitaries—never very numerous, even in the Church's worst days—

* Of course I use this term in a sense less exact than that which it bears in our Articles and Catechism, where "Baptism and the Supper of the Lord" are declared to be—as no doubt they are—"the *only* Sacraments of the Gospel."

who owed their elevation to the caprice of a profligate sovereign.

I often look back on the abuses of those days in Church as well as in State, and marvel that they were borne so patiently; but we had sat so long in darkness that the opening of our eyes was a tedious and uncertain, though eventually a successful operation. The Bishop's high-stepping horses had hardly drawn his Lordship's emblazoned coach out of the town, when my old wearisome life began again. Like the boar in the old legend of Queen's College, I was choked with Greek.* Aorists seemed to fly buz-

* According to the legend, a student of Queen's College, walking in the forest of Shotover, and reading, as he walked, one of Aristotle's treatises, suddenly found himself within a few feet of a wild boar. It was too late to attempt escape; all that he could do was to hurl the volume down the beast's throat, exclaiming as he threw it, "Græcum est." Happily the morsel proved too tough for digestion, so the young man's life was saved. This event is annually commemorated in the College by a remarkable ceremonial. As soon as the fellows are seated at the high table, the fanfare of a trumpet is heard, and the college cook, attended by his subordinates, marches slowly up the hall bearing a charger, on which is displayed an enormous boar's head garnished with herbs. As the procession advances, a scholar of the foundation chants certain verses, of which the rude Latin chorus is sung by four or five of his fellow students. I have

zing like swarms of bees through my brain ; the very potatoes that I ate at dinner tasted like Greek roots.

The only difference in me was that since my confirmation I had striven more strenuously than I had ever done before against the irritability of temper which had made me such a nuisance ; more strenuously, and I hope more successfully. I began to think more seriously about religion ; to examine myself as well as I could, and to pray night and morning for God's forgiveness and His blessing.

no book to refer to, and can only remember two of the verses, which I think run thus :—

“The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary:
And I pray you, Masters, merry be.
Quotquot estis in convivio.

CHORUS.

“Caput apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.

“The boar's head, as I understand,
Is the fairest dish in all the land:
Being thus arrayed in a fair garland
Imprimis vobis profero.

CHORUS.

“Caput apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.”

The effect of this discipline was that I became more tranquil and more patient ; but the poor overwrought brain staggered still under its burden. Unfortunately, not one of my friends attributed my haggard looks to the right cause. I don't think cod liver oil had yet been employed as a remedy for atrophy. If it had, my flickering lamp of life would have been fed with it copiously enough, I am sure. Even as it was, I was plied with food morning, noon, and night, until I began to think that our doctor had adopted the system recommended in an old song that years afterwards I heard sung on the Mole at Naples.*

Old Donald might perhaps have suspected the truth, had not our medical man put him on a wrong scent. As for Wilkins, never having had an hour's illness in his life, he could hardly be expected to understand, or even perceive, the condition of his pupil ; so we went on in the old way, except that

* "Magnammo, amici miei, magnammo e bivimmo,
Fiu che dura l'uoglio nella lucierna."

"Let us eat, my friends, let us eat and drink,
As long as the oil lasts in the lamp."

the doctor having transferred my disease from the liver to the peritonæum or pericardium, I am sure I forget which, exchanged the little phials of black mixture with their accompanying pills for half-pint bottles of a colourless but very ill-smelling fluid, to the inexpressible joy of the bottle boy and his respected mother.

Whether what I am now about to relate was simply the result of this derangement of the nervous system, or to the working of some mysterious law of nature, which (as poor Frederick used to think) detains the parting spirit for a moment on the threshold, ere it enters on its journey from time to eternity, who shall say? All that I can do is to put the reader in possession of the facts as they occurred, and leave him to settle the question for himself, if he can. Winter had set in with more than usual severity, and still no news of the Baltic Fleet, which, according to the judgment of our old friend the Master's mate, ought to have been safely moored in Plymouth Sound or at Spithead weeks ago. In those days we had no telegraph, except

those Jack-in-the-box contrivances which worked only in clear weather, and were consequently all but useless in winter; our postal arrangements too, dearly as we paid for them, were in a condition, as far as the North of Europe was concerned, closely bordering on chaos. So we were left in suspense week after week, wavering between hope and despair, accordingly as the stories which began to be whispered about, of the *St. George's* unseaworthiness were pooh-poohed or believed by our only authority in such matters, the old Master's mate.

I had parted from him one dismal blustering evening with a heavy heart, for the old man, bilious and uncomfortable, was in one of his most desponding moods, and had sat down to my Greek reading in a little room which my mother had given me for a study. How the night wore I hardly noticed, but I think it could not have been far from midnight, when, looking up from my book, I saw in an old-fashioned glass that hung above my writing-table an appearance like smoke or dense mist, which gradually cleared away, exposing a form which I recognised at once

as that of poor Frederick Wells, reclining on something that looked like water agitated by a storm. His face wore that unmistakeable hue of death which I had seen before more than once and could never forget ; the eyes turned back in their sockets seemed, like weary labourers, to have entered into their rest, the jaw drooped as it only droops when spirit and flesh have exchanged their last farewell. On the wave lay his long fair hair, spread over it as if it had been a pillow. I could distinguish plainly enough the fragments of a uniform, covered in part with a strange misty vestment that looked like a shroud. Twice the dead hand rose and the dead mouth quivered, as struggling to give utterance to words which it had not the power of framing. Then there came a roar as of many waters, flashes of lurid light danced before my eyes, and I saw no more.

CHAPTER IV.

“Voilà une maladie, qui m’a bien donné de la peine.”

MOLIERE—*Le Médecin malgré lui.*

THE sun was shining brightly when I opened my eyes next morning ; but when I tried to rise, a strange feeling of lassitude came over me, and I was fain to lay my aching head again on my pillow. How I got into bed I never knew, nor, to own the truth, was ever very careful to inquire ; for, like most young people, I dreaded to hear the tale of my own discomfiture, as I foolishly called it. One thing was certain, that the dream or vision, or whatever it was, of the previous night had completed the mischief of which I had been laying the foundation for months. Body and brain had struck work at last, and there I lay feeble and almost powerless, my extremities cold as ice, and the arteries of my

head throbbing with a fierceness that well-nigh stunned me.

I was not alone, it would seem, for no sooner did I begin to stir than a white figure glided noiselessly from behind the curtain and stood in front of me. I suppose in the confusion of my brain I must have mixed up this apparition with the last object that I had seen before I fell asleep or fainted, whichever it was ; for it was piteous, Betty told me afterwards, to hear my prayers that the dead might not be permitted to return again to terrify me. She had been watching by me, poor old soul, I afterwards found out, ever since the third hour after midnight, when she had relieved my mother, who had insisted on keeping the first watch.

Our family apothecary had been summoned, she told me, whilst I was still unconscious ; and having just sense enough to discover that my illness, whatever it was, was neither peritonitis nor arthritis nor enteritis, nor any other "itis" comprehended within the circle of his own very limited experience, had yielded to my mother's entreaties, and consented, after a little coy resistance for the

sake of appearance, to meet Dr. Sharpe in consultation on this "very abnormal and interesting case."

Judging from the calmness of Dr. Sharpe's manner as he listened to the tale of my symptoms, and the quiet smile that I think I detected playing about his firm lips after his first consultation with his learned brother, the diagnosis, as they called it, could not have been so "abnormal" or so intensely interesting as the inferior practitioner had imagined. Of course professional etiquette prevented his saying as much in words, but from his manner my mother gathered that though the case would require care for a few days, there was not the slightest cause for alarm.

"Keep him in bed two or three days, Mrs. Tregenna," he said, "and then let him run wild in the country for a month or so, at a farm-house, if possible, with the run of the poultry yard and the dairy; and take my word for it, he will be a better man at the end of that time than he has been for months. *I* have watched him for a long time past wasting away, under the severe

discipline of our worthy friend Jeremiah, who, between ourselves, has as little notion of how a growing boy should be treated as I have of German criticism. Of course it was no business of mine, but if I had not been a professional man, I think I should have ventured to hint to Mr. Wilkins that the lad was in a fair way of being worked to death."

As it happened, nothing could be easier of accomplishment than the doctor's plan, for Mr. Tonkin had just taken in hand a little farm of his own, where I was free to occupy a neat little room in his bailiff's cottage.

There it was that I first made the acquaintance of Ada, the beautiful mare described in a former chapter; and very proud I was when Mr. Tonkin, with many ehs and ahs, informed me that, knowing me to be a steady lad, he had placed her at my disposal for the next three or four weeks, perhaps for longer if he were satisfied with my treatment of her. I shall never forget the fit of trembling that seized me the first time I "clomb into the saddle."

There was some excuse for my trepidation perhaps, for my illness had left me very weak and nervous; and the mare's appearance, with her arched neck, bright eyes, and quivering nostrils, was not very reassuring, I thought, especially as she enjoyed at that time a very questionable reputation for quietness. But I soon discovered that my fears were groundless; for the sagacious creature, with that noble instinct which so often teaches horses to carry women and children quietly when men hardly dare mount them, seemed from the first to constitute herself my friend and protectress. She would stand motionless as a rock while I was settling myself in the saddle; and then, obeying the slightest motion of my hand, would walk, trot, or canter as I desired, bounding joyously under me as she felt my courage rising, and subsiding of her own accord into a walk whenever her wondrous instinct—reason I might almost call it—warned her that I was growing weary.

Poor Ada! she lived long enough to be almost the only remaining link of the chain

that bound me to old memories and old associations. In a corner of my home paddock at St. Mervyn, under a weeping willow, there is a mound of earth which my hind's children have turned into a little flower garden. I think, as I pass it sometimes, of the old happy days, when I used to ride forth to meet troops of friends, most of whom are now dust and ashes, like my poor old mare. Thank God! that for them there is the reversion of another home.

My brother Richard, who had long since had the usufruct of Oscar, was the companion of my rides whenever he could shake himself clear of the office, to which he devoted himself with an assiduity that insured the approbation of Mr. Richards. I was too feeble to essay hunting yet; but many and many were the delightful canters that we had over the heathery downs in the neighbourhood of our town in search of the picturesque, or of anything else that attracted us for the moment. Sometimes we tried to botanize, or to sketch half ruinous cottages and pigsties; and once, I remember,

in the pride of art, I actually persuaded an old fishwoman to sit to me, and produced, what both Richard and Katherine pronounced to be a very creditable likeness. But they were indulgent critics, and refrained from noticing an unfortunate attempt at foreshortening which had squeezed one of the old lady's arms into the form of an egg, and twisted her hand into something that looked like a fungus. Her near leg, too, as Richard called it, was somewhat misshapen, like that of a horse that has done hard work. But making due allowance for these little blemishes, it was, we all thought, a wonderful production.

After a month's sojourn at the farm I returned to my mother's, with renewed health and vigour both of body and mind, ready for a death grapple with my old antagonists, the Greek Aorists.

During my absence intelligence had arrived of an event, of which my dream, or whatever it was, might perchance have been a foreshadowing. It had been studiously kept from me as long as there was any

danger of my health being affected by such a communication, but now there was no reason for concealment. Nor in fact would such a course have been any longer practicable, for the first object that met my eye as I rode through the High Street of our town, was the family of one of our principal tradesmen in the deepest mourning, and again and again, as I approached my mother's house, I fell in with groups of old neighbours and acquaintances, whose "inky cloaks" proclaimed that the angel of death had visited their homes. Our town seemed almost like the land of Egypt on that fatal night when in every house there were wailings for the loss of their first-born. For there had been a rush of our seafaring population to obtain berths on board Admiral Reynolds' ship, not only on account of his reputation as a brave and skilful commander, but also because in serving under a fellow-townsmen, especially one so honoured and esteemed among us, there would be, they thought, a security and a feeling of home-iness, if I may coin such an expression, like that which children experience under

the shadow of their father's roof. Alas! of all the gallant company that cheered so joyously when the ship's anchor was weighed in Carrick Roads, not one returned to us to tell the story of her loss.

"On the 9th November, the British 98-gun ship, the *St. George*, Captain Daniel Oliver Guion, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Robert Carthew Reynolds, accompanied by several other men-of-war of the Baltic fleet, and a convoy of 120 merchant vessels, sailed from Hano Sound for England. On the 15th, when the fleet lay at anchor off the coast of Zealand, waiting for a fair wind, a violent storm arose, in which about thirty of the convoys perished, and the *St. George* drove on shore, but eventually got off with the loss of her three masts and rudder. The men-of-war, with the remainder of the convoy, then proceeded to Wingo Sound, where the *St. George* was fitted with jury masts and a Pakenham's rudder, and the whole fleet got ready to depart with the first fair wind. On the 17th December, the fleet, consisting of eight sail of the line, several frigates and smaller vessels of war,

and about a hundred merchant-vessels, sailed from Wingo Sound, and as the *St. George* was, as we have seen, in a greatly disabled state, the seventy-four-gun ships *Cressy* and *Defence*, were appointed to attend her. The fleet had just cleared the Sleeve, when a tremendous gale of wind came on, which blew successively from the W.N.W., West, and South, and then shifted with greater violence than ever to the N.W. On the 24th, after combating with the gale for five days, the *St. George* and *Defence* were wrecked on the western coast of Jutland; and the whole of their united crews, except six men of the one and twelve of the other, perished. The *Cressy* saved herself by wearing from the starboard tack and standing to the southward; but Captain Atkins, of the *Defence*, could not be persuaded to quit the Admiral without signal to part company, and therefore shared his melancholy fate. On the 25th, the 74-gun ship *Hero*, Captain James Newman, met a similar fate on the Haak Sand, off the Texel, with the loss of all her crew except twelve men, thus making altogether nearly 2000 officers

and men entombed that winter in a watery grave.”*

For a long time after the arrival of these dismal tidings, our town wore a sad and gloomy aspect, but grief is sure to wear itself out sooner or later, so we were beginning to look cheerful again, when another event occurred, which if it did not affect us so deeply, at least prevented any demonstrations of gaiety for the present.

Sir John Maundrell had long been suffering from a painful and incurable disease, under the pressure of which his life ebbed out at last. I do not know that any of us had any vehement affection for him, but his long residence in our neighbourhood had established a claim to our kindly consideration, just as a long-remembered piece of furniture might have done.

He was by no means a bad specimen of the higher order of Tory Squires in those days; kind-hearted, easy of access, and ready to oblige, provided the obligation involved no sacrifice on his own part. If, as I suspect, he was much more selfish at heart than his

* James's "Naval History," year 1811.

manner indicated, he had the tact, like Charles II., to hide it under an appearance of geniality which imposed upon those who had no occasion to put his sincerity to the proof.

In Parliament he was a consistent maintainer of the Constitution, such as he understood it to be ; and a warm supporter of the Church as by law established. Like most of our public men, he looked upon the Habeas Corpus Act as a powerful ingredient in our political system, which, like certain chemical substances, was most inoffensive in a state of *suspension*.

An alteration of the Game Laws, proposed by a Whig statesman, with a view, as he told the House, of rendering that luxury accessible to all who had the means of paying for it, he resisted with a vehemence which seemed a little out of place in one who regularly paid his fishmonger's bills by remittances of hares and pheasants.

But these errors, if errors they were, were rather the result of his training than proofs of dishonesty or a tyrannical temper. Viewed by "the light of other days," he was an enlightened politician and a true patriot. On the whole he was a very tole-

nable neighbour too, mixing freely with the gentry in town as well as country, with little assumption of superiority on his part and still less of flunkeyism on theirs. It could hardly be otherwise indeed, for the sturdy independence of our miners—many of whom were far wealthier than the richest of our landed proprietors, and in the second generation, at all events, equally well-educated—would have scouted the idea of placing their hands, as they expressed it, under the foot of any man, merely for the sake of his dead ancestors. So, taking all things into consideration, I think we were rather sorry than otherwise when we saw the velvet-covered coffin which contained his dust lowered into the vault where the Sir Geoffreys and Sir Hildebrands of former days awaited his arrival among them. Had we known what was to follow, we should have been sorrier still perhaps.

The new Baronet was a distant relation, who had been living, as we were told, a life of very questionable respectability in London, fluttering about the Court of the Prince Regent, and figuring every now and then in the scandalous chronicles of that profligate.

gate age. Of Cornwall he knew nothing, nor ever, I believe, expressed a desire to become better acquainted with her or her inhabitants. During the month that he passed among us every year, not a tenant, however respectable, was visited by him. He would as soon have thought of making a friendly call on the clerks who paid his quarterly dividends at the Bank of England.

According to his views, the Three per Cents. and land were equally "investments," on which interest was paid, in the one case by tenants and in the other by the managers of the National Debt. In either instance it was a commercial transaction and nothing more. Under pretence of securing a sufficient supply of game for the yearly battues which he first introduced among us, Sir Thomas Maundrell rigorously excluded the public from his grounds. Even the old summer-house, where generation after generation of our townsmen had boiled their kettles, was now tabooed. Like the spirit who peered stealthily through the half-opened gates of Paradise,* we were fain to catch a glimpse

* Moore's "Paradise and the Peri."

of the old, well-remembered scenes, as we glided by them in our little boats on half-holidays ; but with this exception, Retallack Manor was now a strange land.

The children of our National Schools, and the children of a larger growth who played at being riflemen, were forced to go farther a-field in search of unoccupied ground. Old ladies and gentlemen missed their annual pic-nic—lovers were driven to tell their tale of love elsewhere. I believe all the world was annoyed and disgusted—except the poaching brotherhood, who now for the first time in our neighbourhood were elevated into the position of an important commercial interest by the facilities which the abundance of game afforded for the exercise of their industry. When the fever of discontent was at its height, there was found one morning pasted on the park gate, a half sheet of whity-brown paper, bearing the following inscription :—

“ Good park and no deer ;
Good house and no cheer ;
Good cellar and no beer ;
Sir Thomas Maundrell liveth here.”

By how many persons this doggerel was

read before it was pulled down by the head-keeper it is impossible to say ; but at any rate it met the gaze of at least one pair of unfriendly eyes, for the very next week the lines appeared in our Radical paper, with a commentary of such exceeding bitterness that the editor was threatened with an action for libel, which he only escaped by an abject recantation in his next issue.

Such was Sir Thomas Maundrell, and of this character were our relations with him. Our respect for his predecessor had been shown soon after his death by a sort of funeral service in St. Mary's Church, with the usual accompaniments of Dead March, an anthem which spoke of the blessedness of the faithful dead, and a really eloquent sermon from Jeremiah Wilkins.

In vulgar phrase, you might have heard a pin drop as in manly but touching language he went on step by step to develop from his text a comparison between the dismal misgivings with which the heathen philosophers and poets of the olden time contemplated the approach of death, and the sure and certain hope of the Christian.

Drawing freely on his treasury of things new and old, he told us of Plato and Aristotle and Cicero—how all their learned speculations ended only in this, that *maybe* the soul did not perish with the body, but survived in a half-sentient, half-torpid state, with just such an interest in the things of earth as spectators at a theatre experience in the plot of some old-world story enacted before them. Then he told them in what melancholy strains the father of Latin lyric poetry described the passage from life to death—the eternal exile from the home of his fathers—the last kiss imprinted on the lips of his faithful wife—the dismal cypresses alone of all the trees that he had planted, available for the service of their dead lord. Compare with this dreary view the Christian's certain prospect of a dwelling-place beyond the dark waters—"a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Well might the believer, with such a home in view, sing triumphantly of the victory wrested from the grave—of the sting torn from the jaws of death.

I feel how poor and feeble my description is of a discourse, every word of which found its way to the hearts of men, women, and children in that crowded congregation.

It was rendered all the more effective, I think, by the fact that his notices of the individual whose death they commemorated were very scanty and very sober.

"They had met there," he said, "to magnify the mercy of Jehovah, in providing a remedy for sin and a refuge from the wrath to come; not to give to a creature the praise which none might share with a jealous God."

The remainder of this year passed away uneventfully enough. The beginning of the next would see me, if all went well, an alumnus of the great educational establishment of Rugby. To such a consummation I looked forward now with tolerable confidence, for ever since the restoration of my health I had been working steadily, and was now pronounced by Jeremiah Wilkins to be very fairly qualified to stand an examination both in Latin and Greek.


The only occurrence that I remember

was the exposure of a "savoury professor," as Jeremiah called him, whose oven was one morning blown to atoms and himself terribly scorched by the explosion of a large quantity of gunpowder, concealed in certain posts and rails, which the man of dough had surreptitiously appropriated to his own use. Rather than face the ridicule which the discovery of this misadventure was sure to produce, the good man, as soon as he was fit to travel, quitted our neighbourhood, and established himself, as we afterwards heard, in a distant town, where his long lane of hypocrisy and knavery has found, let us hope, a turning at last. Be that as it may, he has already acquired for himself, we hear, a reputation for respectability, which is steadily paving his way to the civic chair of the little borough which he has chosen for his residence.

CHAPTER V.

"Quoth Hudibras, I do believe,
That argument's demonstrative."

BUTLER.

IKE the two knights who approached the shield from different quarters, Mr. Tonkin and my mother had almost quarrelled over the aspects which the Rugby question presented to them severally. To him it seemed a senseless waste of money to send a boy hundreds of miles away, when the best of instruction might be had at home, and that almost for nothing.

"Look at me," he said. "I was never out of the county in my life, yet on the whole I stand tolerably well with my neighbours, I believe. An Alderman's gown and one's name in the Commission of the Peace for the County, are a pretty fair ending for a man who, like me, began his career as a buddle-boy."

My mother, with all her good sense, was never very quick at a rejoinder. To the only reply that occurred at that moment, it would have been of course imprudent as well as impertinent to give utterance—namely, that it might perhaps be desirable for a youth who was *not* a buddle-boy, to acquire a little more polish than had been attainable in his (Mr. Tonkin's) case. So she very wisely called in a powerful auxiliary in the person of Jeremiah Wilkins, whose vehement oratory, if it did not altogether convince the old man, at least terrified him into acquiescence. One argument I think he appreciated to a certain extent, appealing as it did “ad crumenam.”

The climax was something like that mentioned in the story of the traveller who was in too great a hurry to let a missing nail be placed in his horse's shoe—and so cast the shoe, and lamed the horse, and lost his life in consequence.

“If he doesn't learn more Greek than he can get here,” Jeremiah said, “he wont pass at Oxford, and if he doesn't pass, he wont get a degree; and without a degree

he can't be ordained; and unless he is ordained he can't hold a living—so you or somebody else will have to maintain him as long as he lives.”

There was no gainsaying a conclusion ushered in by such a hailstorm of hypotheses exploding one after another like crackers about the ears of the unfortunate Mr. Tonkin. So he laid down his arms, as poor Donald had done before him in a contest of wits with Mr. Wilkins, and consented somewhat sulkily to sanction the selling out of a small amount of funded capital every year to meet the expenses of my maintenance at Rugby and Oxford.

“Somewhat sulkily,” I said, but with all his petulance, Tonkin was not the man to cherish resentment, even for a day. So within a few hours there came an invitation to my mother to meet Mr. Wilkins and a few other friends at supper on the following Monday, bringing of course all her family with her.

If the mirth at this entertainment was not very refined, none could deny that it was genuine. Even Jeremiah himself was be-

guiled by a charming young lady who presumed to call him "Jerry," into singing a somewhat rowdy song, which he protested he had never sung since he took his Bachelor's degree. There was nothing actually improper in the words, only they were a little out of keeping perhaps with the gravity of our Curate's general demeanour. Such at any rate was the opinion of a triangular-faced old lady, who reported them to her gossips the next day, with a commentary steeped in vinegar; but his reputation as a good man and consistent clergyman was proof against such assaults from such a quarter: so little harm came of it.

Mr. Tonkin laughed and joked and rollicked and told some of his best stories; all of which were trumped in succession by Mr. Richards, whose long experience of society in almost all its phases qualified him admirably to play the part of a *raconteur*. Donald contributed his share of the "feast of reason and flow of soul," by reciting with great feeling a few verses of his countryman Burns's "Cotter's Saturday Night." Then there were charades, and little recitations of poetry

more or less successful, and pretty sentimental songs mostly sung by the younger ladies.

All was going on delightfully, when we were startled by a loud solemn rap at the street door, which was opened with a promptitude so unusual as to justify the suspicion that Jack, Mr. Tonkin's old butler, valet, and carpenter, was not altogether unprepared for an addition to our party.

In they came, a goodly company of some ten or a dozen decent artisans, as we judged from their dress and demeanour. Bowing low to Mr. Tonkin and the company in general, their leader, an erratic musical genius, well-known to most of us, commenced in a clear well-modulated tenor the

WASSAIL SONG,

I.

Now here at this house we first will begin
To drink the King's health, which a custom has been ;
And to Master too we'll drink a good health,
And we hope he will prosper in virtue and wealth,
To maintain our Was-sail.*

CHORUS.

Wassail, Wassail, Wassail, Wassail !
And joy come to our jolly Wassail.

* A strong accent is laid in the last syllable.

II.

In a friendly manner this house we salute,
For it is an old custom you need not dispute;
Ask not the reason from whence it do spring,
For you very well know 'tis an old ancient thing
Is our Wassail.

CHORUS.

Wassail, Wassail, &c. &c. &c.

III.

It has been a custom as we have been told,
By ancient housekeepers in the days of old,
That young men and maidens to us should draw near,
Then fill up our bowl with some cider or beer,
Which is our Wassail.

CHORUS.

Wassail, Wassail, &c. &c. &c.

As the choragus finished the last line, old Jack, with a hospitable grin on his hard features, stepped forward from behind a screen, and poured a copious libation into the large wooden bowl, which one of the company presented to him. It was old ale of terrible potency, the effect of which we could discern in the increased energy with which the leader carolled out the next verse—

IV.

Now for this good liquor of cider or beer,
And for the great kindness that we have had here,

We return you our thanks ; and will still bear in mind
How you have been bountiful, loving, and kind,
Towards our Wassail.

CHORUS.

Wassail, Wassail, &c. &c. &c.

V.

Now jolly old Christmas is passing away,
And posting off from us—this is the last day,
That we shall be able with you to abide,
So farewell, old Christmas, this merry old tide,
With our Wassail.

CHORUS.

Wassail, Wassail, &c. &c. &c.

VI.

Now for the great kindness that we do receive,
We return you our thanks, and will soon take our leave ;
From this present time we must bid you adieu,
Until the next year, when we come back to you,
With our jolly Wassail.

CHORUS.

Wassail, Wassail, &c. &c. &c.

With these last words the performance ended, and the feast too, as far as the dining-room guests were concerned. But Mr. Tonkin, like the “fine old English gentleman” in the song—

Whene'er he feasted all the great,
Remembered too the small.

On that night his large kitchen was filled

to overflowing with a motley company of maimed, halt, blind, and aged, whose poor withered hearts were warmed by the remnant of our feast, washed down by draughts of good sound beer. He feared to trust them with the potent ale which the wassailers had quaffed so merrily, and apparently with so little unseemly effect. But they were very happy all the same, and very thankful to their hospitable entertainer.*

The cheering was a little discordant, proceeding as it did from a whole gamut of voices, of which the basses were the result of a succession of bad colds, and the tenors and trebles the contribution of boys with cracked voices and squeaking old women.

But harsh as it was, it had still a twang, Jeremiah thought, of that melody which

* Many years afterwards I prevailed on an old parishioner of mine, to whom I had done some little kindness, to let me write from his dictation the words of this Wassail song, which, like the traditional statutes of the Masonic Brotherhood, are supposed never to be

“Writ or blazed in word or scroll.”

The practice of singing them has, I suspect, become obsolete, and the song itself unknown except by a few persons as grey-headed as my informant and myself.

the beneficence of the Arabian philanthropist called forth from the hearts of widows and men ready to perish in the olden time.*

“God reward you, Mr. Tonkin,” said an old sailor with a wooden leg. “They may call you duffer and snob” (the poor are apt to be very candid, especially when they want their own opinion to contrast favourably with that of the world in general), “and talk of your odd ways, and say you got them from your mother the old washerwoman; but *I* always says ‘handsome is as handsome does;’ and if you wasn’t always a gentleman, you are one now and acts like one, especially when you has to do with the poor. One cheer more, neighbours, for Tonkin, the poor man’s friend in need.”

Then trebles, tenors, and basses rang out again until the rafters “dirled” with the noise.

When silence was restored, Mr. Tonkin, who I really believe liked this sort of rough

* Job, chap. xxix. v. 13.

ovation, dismissed the assembly with a few kindly words ; and so ended our Christmas feast.

My journey to Rugby was like most winter's journeys in those slow-going days, very tedious and very chilly, but without any adventure worth mentioning, except the coach being snowed up for twelve hours somewhere in the neighbourhood of Warwick.

I think I never felt my loneliness so bitterly as I did on that dismal night, while I lay on the floor of a little inn parlour, in the midst of more than a dozen inside and outside passengers ; for it was market-day, they told us, at Stratford, our last stage, and most of them were farmers and graziers, who had been doing business there.

There was only one spare bed in the house, and that had been secured by a commercial traveller, whose long experience of the road taught him to rush at once into the bar, whilst the rest of us were stamping about in the inn-yard in the hope of bringing back a little life into our benumbed feet before we ventured to sit down.

So we had no choice between bivouacking in the snow—an experiment which I afterwards saw tried with very indifferent success by Dornford of Wadham (“Corporal Dornford,” as we used to call him, from his having served in the Peninsula as a volunteer) and a little knot of his admirers. We had no choice between this and lying down “head and tail,” as an Irish passenger remarked, on the sloppy floor, with not even as much relief as the imprisoned giant obtained from changing his “fessum latus.”*

As we tumbled down, there we lay through the long hours of that dismal night, the noses of the sleepers uniting their bass all the time to the higher notes of those who either scolded and wrangled in their misery or told pointless stories, to which nobody even affected to listen.

The only benefit that we derived from

* “*Fama est, Enceladi semiustum fulmine corpus
Urgeri mole hac, ingentemque insuper Ætnam
Impositam ruptis flammam expirare caminis :
Et fessum quoties mutat latus, intremere omnem
Murmure Trinacriam.*”

VIRGIL—*Æn.* 3, 581.

our "duress" was that it rendered anything like a fight impossible, our hostile demonstrations being necessarily confined to prodding one another's sides with our elbows, as often as real or imaginary causes of offence presented themselves.

To add to our miseries the young lady of the house, trying to thread her way through the prostrate crowd, was tripped up by the projecting paunch of a stout grazier, and in her struggles to save herself from falling, discharged over us the foaming contents of a can of ale that held at least two gallons.

Morning was very very slow in coming, but it came at last ; and wet, weary, and cross we picked ourselves up, and crawled out into the inn-yard, where the coach stood.

Meanwhile a strong party of labourers had dug a lane through the snow ; so after a little delay, and a good deal of noise, we started again on our journey.

As long as the labourers cleared the way before us we got on tolerably well ; but they had hardly been discharged half an hour when coach and horses got off the road and floundered together into a deep ditch

from which the horses struggled in vain to disengage themselves.

What was to be done now?

“Auxillerys,” as the guard called them, came terribly dear, and he shrank from the responsibility of employing any more of them. So, like the boatswain of a storm-tossed ship, who pipes all hands on deck to shorten sail, he set each of the passengers to work, some to lighten the coach of the luggage, others to stand at the horses’ heads whilst the coachman tried to lash them into action. But all was in vain—the poor beasts snorted, reared, floundered; but not an inch of way did they make.

Then we tried to move the coach by hanging on to the spokes of the wheels; but hard as we tugged—and cold as the weather was, we worked till the perspiration ran from us in streams—no more effect was produced on the ill-conditioned machine than if we had been hauling away all the time on a stranded line-of-battle ship.

At last, when we had almost decided to save, if possible, the horses and ourselves

and leave the coach to its fate, it occurred to a native, who happened to be one of our passengers, that there must be a large farmhouse somewhere thereabouts, four or five miles off, he thought. Might it not be worth while to try and get a team from thence? To this suggestion the guard, whose temper, the coachman told us, was "short" at the best of times, replied by a volley of abuse requesting the disgusted native to mind his own business, if he had any; and interlarding his discourse with oaths in the proportion of one to every three words—and then when lack of breath constrained him to be silent, quietly disengaging one of the leaders from the wreck, and riding off, whither, or for what purpose, none of us could guess, until, after two hours or more of anxious waiting, we saw him returning through the fog, followed by a stout waggon team of six horses, which he had procured at the very farmhouse the mention of which had excited his wrath.

The farmer, a fine young fellow of thirty, the very beau ideal of a British Yeoman, professed his readiness to afford us every

assistance in his power, and at once gave directions to his carters to hook on the wagon horses in front of our team. It would be better he thought to try a way across the fields, which he would show us, than to attempt the road, which it was almost impossible to distinguish from the deep ditches that bounded it on each side.

A poor woman was lying he told us at his house at that moment dead and stiff; she had been found that morning by his shepherd half-buried in a snowdrift, feebly trying to scare away a carrion crow which kept pecking at her. They had unhung a gate and carried her up to the house as tenderly as they could, but before they reached the last stile, all was over. It was a dismal sight to see her little children hanging over her, he said, and sad to hear them calling on "mammy" to get up and speak to them. "Poor thing, she had gone, he supposed, to join her husband, the best carter he ever had in his life, who was crushed to death last harvest between the hind wheel of his wagon and the gate-post."

He hoped they were happy together now,

he thought they must be, for they were good God-fearing people as any in the parish, both of them—and so the Parson said in the first sermon he preached after the poor man's funeral—but it was a sad look-out for the orphan children, God help them !

However, there were people in the parish, he knew (the good fellow never hinted at himself, though he, as we afterwards learnt, was the only well-to-do farmer for miles around), there were people in the parish who would take care that the poor little things never wanted bread and cheese—no, nor clothes and shoe leather either, for that matter.

So entirely had the farmer been occupied, first in directing the preparations for the release of our carriage, and then in the relation of this dismal story, that he had not had time to reconnoitre our party.

The first face that caught his eye was that of the ill-used native, whom he addressed as Mr. Hopkins, “an opulent maltster of Kenilworth,” as he informed us with a mild assumption of dignity, which sat

awkwardly, I thought, on his jolly figure and good-humoured sunburnt face.

Still, the effect of these few words was all that could be desired; for no sooner was Mr. Hopkins's real position in society made clear to us, than we vied with one another in showing him all the respect due to so great a man.

Three or four of the farmers who had rather been inclined to side with the guard in his quarrel with the nameless stranger, now pressed forward with outstretched hands eager to remind him of certain transactions in barley, to which he and they had been parties at Warwick market three or four years "back" as they expressed it.

Even the surly guard was heard to mutter something about "no offence being intended," "didn't know who he was," and such like expressions of tardy civility which the maltster either did not hear, or did not think worth noticing. Then, after breakfasting on some cold meat and beer, which the farmer's men had brought down from the house for our use, the whole caravan started afresh under the guidance of our

friend, who led the way across the fields on a stout galloway. For two hours or more we went on at a foot pace, without encountering any obstacle worth mentioning.

But even pilots are out in their reckoning sometimes. Our guide had quite forgotten certain heaps of manure, not high enough to show their heads above the surface of the snow, but congealed by the frost into a substance as hard and almost as dangerous as iron. On one of these sunken rocks we struck with a crash that sounded like the breaking up of our unfortunate vehicle.

The actual damage, we found on examination, was confined to the "springing," as a sailor would call it, of the pole of the coach, and the loosening of two or three spokes of the off forewheel. But the necessity of sending four or five miles for a wheelwright to repair the mischief, and procuring a fresh gang of labourers to clear the road, caused so much delay that it was midday before we started afresh—just in time to encounter another heavy fall of snow, which rendered our progress so slow that it was long past sunset when we arrived at Rugby.

The next morning I waited on the Head Master, and after an easy examination enough, was placed by him in the upper division of the fifth form, a fact which I announced triumphantly in a letter to Donald Fraser the same afternoon. It had been arranged that I should remain a year at Rugby, but my career was suddenly cut short by an unexpected occurrence.

By the will of its founder or the statutes of Exeter College, I forget which, the holder of an exhibition was permitted to retain it for seven years, dating from his matriculation, subject only to the condition of keeping bonâ-fide residence every term of the first four years. Being the only candidate duly qualified, I had been nominated to two of these exhibitions, worth together a sum which was a very acceptable addition to my scanty income. The Easter holidays had just begun when I received an intimation from the Trustees that the present holder of the exhibitions, whose tenure had yet a year to run, had obtained unexpectedly a Michel Fellowship at Queen's, which of course vacated his present preferment.

To this notice Jeremiah Wilkins added a short postscript in his usual rough-and-ready style. "If you don't want to be a fool," it said, "and lose your exhibition, you must get yourself entered the first day of Easter Term. Go up to Oxford a day or two sooner, if you can, for fear of accidents. I enclose a line to my old friend the Subrector, who will tell you all that you need know further about it."

Thus abruptly ended my connexion with Rugby, which I have sometimes thought need never have commenced. But I saw so little of the school and its discipline, as to be hardly a competent judge of the benefits, present and prospective, to be derived from a longer residence there. I believe, in a jog-trot sort of way, it did its work fairly enough, under the iron sway of a master whose practice of relieving undue pressure on the brain by counter irritation obtained for him the sobriquet of "Great Cry and little Wooll."

Arnold was a junior fellow of Oriel, and Tait and Temple were, I suppose, school-boys themselves, at the period of which I am

writing. There was little, I suspect, in those days worth recording of the old place ; and even that little had no chronicler until the times of "Tom Brown," whose writings, in conjunction with Stanley's biography of Arnold, have made the great educational reformer's name a household word among us.

Bearing with me a certificate of good behaviour under the hand of the Head Master, I presented myself the first day of Easter Term at the residence of the Sub-rector of Exeter College. The courage which I had been trying hard to screw up as I walked from the "Angel" to Exeter, sank a little at the sound of a gruff and, as I fancied, somewhat angry voice, which replied to my modest rap by bidding me "Come in."

Opening the door, I found myself face to face with a tall middle-aged man, who, except that he wore a brown wig instead of a powdered one, might have passed at a little distance for Donald himself. The coat, the short nether garments, the silk stockings, even the quiet one-sided smile, were the same.

I had come, I thought, at an unfortunate moment, for the Sub-rector was just then engaged in "blowing up" his scout for some trifling offence — I think it was for placing a large veal pie on his breakfast-table instead of a small one.

The occasion, I thought, hardly seemed to justify the thunderstorm of wrath which rolled out its long, swelling peals on the head of the unfortunate bed-maker; and so, I suspect, thought Mr. Jukes after a minute's consideration; for almost before the offender had placed the door between himself and his angry master, he turned to me with a smile—and a very sweet smile it was, when he liked to make it so—and said that he was a fool for putting himself into such a "pucker," but those confounded (I am sure that was the word he used)—those confounded scouts were more sometimes than a man's temper could stand.

Just glancing at Jeremiah's note of introduction, he bade me sit down, remarking that the "dunderheaded" fellow's blunder had not been so much amiss after

all, for the little pie would have been short commons for two of us.

Inferring from this remark that I was to be his guest, I sat down opposite him and began my meal, listening all the time to his quaint remarks, at some of which, in spite of all my reverence for his office, I could not refrain from laughing.

Little did I imagine when, like Dante's ruined spirits, I left, as I thought, all hope on the other side of that grim portal*—little did I imagine that a *tête-à-tête* breakfast with one's tutor could be so delightful.

Breakfast over, Mr. Jukes, after a few inquiries about my classical attainments, and a very handsome eulogium on Jeremiah Wilkins, "a man far too good for the out-of-the-way corner of the world where he had buried himself," prepared to accompany me to the Vice-Chancellor's.

* "Per me si va nella città dolente:
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore.
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate."

"Through me they tread the tearful city's streets;
Through me the entrance to eternal woe.
Leave hope behind, all ye that enter here."

DANTE—*Inferno*, Canto 3.

I had contrived when I was at Rugby to get hold of a copy of the University Statutes, every one of which I considered myself bound to observe even in the minutest particular. In this spirit I had made the statute "*de vestitu*" the glass by which I dressed.

My short drab breeches were as nearly as possible, I thought, of the "*colore sub-fusco*" prescribed by the statute ; and so, in a different style, was my snuff-coloured coat with its dismal buttons. My hair was cut in a modest style, neither too long nor too short (*etiam in capillitio modus sit*). From my fat white neckcloth hung a thing which I had got made for me at Rugby, a model I thought of the vestment—I forget its Latin name—which the statute designates as "*Anglice, bands.*"

It was too late now to effect any change in my principal habiliments, even if I had known as much then as I did afterwards about their extreme absurdity. All that could be done was the removal of my comical "*pendant*," which the old scout replaced by a tiny bandlet scarcely three

inches in length, and narrow in proportion. Then my arms were thrust through the holes of a sleeveless undergraduate's gown (exhibitioners were not dressed as "scholars" until long afterwards), and placing a trencher cap on my head, I sallied forth a perfect specimen, as I conceived, of the "nondum graduatus" contemplated by the statutes.

At the Vice-Chancellor's we found a group of youngsters, one or two of whom were "*habillés à quatre epingles*," like myself; but the majority—most of them, I think, Etonians, who were carelessly attired like ordinary mortals—seemed very much inclined to titter at our grotesque appearance.

After a few introductory words from our tutors, the Vice-Chancellor, a pompous little man, whose feet, as the story went, had got entangled in his preposterously long bands the first time he went in state to St. Mary's, administered to each of us an oath, binding us to observe rigidly the statutes of the University, a copy of which he placed in our hands.

Thenceforth we were "men" every one of us, not even excepting the lad of fourteen who had just obtained a scholarship at Corpus. I for one felt that I had entered on a new stage of my life's journey, and prayed quietly that strength might be granted me to travel the road well and Christianly.

CHAPTER VI.

"O Jupiter, King of Heaven! What a row the little bird makes!"—ARISTOPHANES—*The Birds*.



AFTER a short stroll through the city I returned to College, and girt up my loins for the work before me. First of all came the necessary arrangements for my residence. The choice lay between two miseries—a garret, where the wretched occupant was roasted in summer and frozen in winter, like a political prisoner on the Piombi at Venice, and a dank half-subterraneous den, full of discomforts and black beetles, but having the palpable advantage of there being no stairs to climb.

The door of this last-mentioned tenement opened on a dark passage leading to a small quadrangle, the popular name of which I had rather not repeat. One advantage it had over most of the garrets in the possession of a tiny bedroom, too confined to

swing a cat in, if I had had any passion for such a recreation, and a still smaller pantry, or scout's room, fitted with two little bins, one for wine, the other for coals and faggots. After "thirding" the furniture of this pleasant bower—that is, paying to the last tenant two-thirds of its original value, as settled by an appraiser—I set about my housekeeping arrangements, which were wonderfully simplified by my scout being a grocer, fruiterer, and buttermilk man. Little did I suspect then that the "full-flavoured Bohea" with which he supplied me, at three times the price charged by Twining for the real article, had already done duty at some other man's breakfast table, or that it would ever come out afresh, under the name of "Pekoe-flavoured Hyson," or "good rough breakfast Congou," as soon as sufficient time had been allowed for the drying and manipulation of the used-up leaves.

Subject only to the conditions required by the variety of substances, this practice extended itself to every department of undergraduate housekeeping. Our eggs were the survivors of Lent, or even of October Term,

sometimes even veterans who had lived through the Long Vacation. But these last were universally eschewed, except by the rawest of freshmen. In the pride of my heart I had ventured on the extravagance of laying in half-a-dozen of curious old crusted port, of some wonderful vintage, the date of which I forget, and delighted I was to hear it pronounced "first rate" by a man of some four terms standing, who had laid aside his dignity so far as to accept the invitation of a freshman. I suppose the rogue of a wine merchant had never reckoned on any portion of his "curious" liquor being kept beyond the end of Trinity Term. At any rate so it was, that when, early in October Term, three or four men came to "wine" at my rooms, it was found that the produce of that world-renowned vintage had transformed itself during the Long Vacation into a filthy compound, of which even now I cannot think without shuddering. As for bread, butter, and the nameless little luxuries of the breakfast table, my scout, with great kindness and consideration, provided against my ever eating them in an unwhole-

somely stale condition, by appropriating the half of every consignment to his own use. The effect of this sanitary measure on my battels* I did not find out until the end of term, when it was too late to dispute any item.

In those primitive times we always dined in the hall at four o'clock, the fellows at what was called the "high table," and the bachelors and undergraduates at tables running down the hall at right angles to the principal one. At the high table sat also the "gentlemen commoners," young men who thought it worth while to pay dearly for the privilege of wearing a silk gown and velvet cap, dining at the fellows' table, and shirking lectures and chapel whenever so disposed.

As all these privileges were attainable by any man of decent character who had the means of paying for them, it sometimes happened that the distinctive title of "gentleman" was applied on the "lucus a non lucendo" principle, as that of "lambs" was

* College bills.

borne by the fiercest soldiers of Cromwell's army. I remember an instance of this in the case of a young fellow whose wild pranks occasioned his "rustication" for a couple of terms, and ultimately his retirement to the more congenial atmosphere of St. Alban's Hall.

I think it was on the second night of my residence in College that I was awakened by loud cries, or rather shrieks, of "Murder, Mr. Rector! Murder, Mr. Sub-rector!" uttered with frightful vehemence by this singular young gentleman. They had dragged him to the pump, and were trying to revive him out of a state of stupid intoxication by the free application of cold water to his head and shoulders. As far as the accomplishment of this object went, the experiment, it must be confessed, was abundantly successful, for in a very few minutes he began to shriek like a maniac; but the result was, I think, a fever, which licked up what little of humidity there remained in a brain already nearly "as dry as the remaining biscuit after a voyage."* His last perform-

* Shakspeare—*As you Like it*.

ance was the application of a petard of his own construction to the "oak," or outer door, of the Sub-rector's rooms, in revenge for some imaginary affront. The damage actually done was no very serious matter; but such an audacious breach of discipline could not be overlooked, even in the case of a "gentleman" commoner, so our poor friend was banished forth, with the world all before him in the shape of the ever open gates of "the Albany."

Short of such exploits as these, our gentlemen commoners, like the King, could do no wrong. They hunted, broke their ribs, and then sheltered themselves from censure under a plea of "æger," which closed the mouths of impertinent meddlers, if such there were; they "knocked in" after midnight, taking care to secure the silence of the porter by heavy bribes. Their lectures they either shirked altogether, or attended with the avowed object of turning the whole proceeding into ridicule, by handing round caricatures of the lecturer, under pretence of an exchange of books with some man who sat at the other extremity of the class. Inch

by inch they pushed back his table, until he found himself imprisoned in a corner. They placed musical snuff-boxes on the table under their handkerchiefs, and then tittered at the rebuke of the lecturer for their folly in not being able to hear even a fiddle in the street without laughing. Bad as all this was, it had been a hundred times worse under the administration of the previous Sub-rector, a retired naval chaplain; a good man enough in his way, but inferior, probably, to most of his pupils in scholarship. I have heard some of the bachelors describe the effect produced on his class by his blundering but pompous recitation of Homer. One line especially dwelt in their memories, as well it might, for most of them, I suspect, had been concerned at one time or another in chalking it on his oak, with the requisite correction.

“Pollas d' iphthimous psuchas Aidi proiapsen.”

But whether it was that the joke was too subtle for his comprehension, or that he deemed the restoration of one stone a hopeless labour in a fabric where all was rotten; or, like the ignorant monk in the old story,

thought the "mumpsimus" which he had used so long, good enough to last his time—whatever the cause was, not a word, or a syllable, or a quantity did he ever alter; or, as far as they could see, ever exhibit any consciousness of such alteration having been suggested by any one else.

But childish and giddy-pated as most of our gentlemen commoners were, there were here and there exceptions, creditable in proportion to the temptations to which the whole body were exposed by the culpable laxity of college discipline in those easy-going times. Conspicuous among our steadiest men and hardest readers was a young Irish nobleman, whom our Rector had picked up, it was said, in one of his visits to the sister island. There was a vague tradition in College that his friendship with the young man's father had been cemented after a strange fashion in their undergraduate days. The Irish Earl and the future Rector were standing together one day before the hall fire, when the latter, in the heat of an argument about the comparative advantages of England and Ireland as places of residence, let

fall some disparaging remarks about Ribbonism, shooting of landlords and their land stewards, and other Irish peculiarities. In a moment, before he was aware almost, the unlucky student was raised in the strong arms of the Irish giant, and banged down in a sitting posture on the top of a blazing fire. In what condition he was taken off I never heard. The two warm-hearted young men were soon reconciled, and became faster friends than ever, but even down to our own time the name of "Red-hot Cole" kept alive the memory of the assault.*

At this time our College, like most others, was emerging slowly, but surely, as the event proved, from the slough which at the close of the late and beginning of the present century threatened to swallow up the hopes of our country as far as her higher and middle classes were concerned. Unmistakeable signs of this might be discerned in the improved tone of our social meetings.

There were still, it is true, wine, and more especially supper parties, where one or

* A fact.

two of the guests would assert their right of drinking to excess; but this sort of revelry was only the flash that indicated the death-struggle of the taper.

As a general rule the practice of drinking to intoxication was all but extinct. The leaders of fashion at Christ Church and Oriel had pronounced it a low thing, fit only for members of the smaller colleges, the coarse North countrymen of Brasenose and Queen's, the moorlings of Exeter, the leek-wearing Taffies of Jesus.

I believe this declaration of our self-constituted censors had more effect in checking the disreputable practice than all the remonstrances of our tutors. We could not bear to be lumped all together as a "numerus," a "pecus," a rabble of low-lived snobs, who still retained a practice which gentlemen had abandoned. And so, after a time, the very worst of us became as temperate on compulsion as our steadier men had long since been on principle, and little by little the demon of drink was driven from his stronghold.

I have spoken of the Sub-rector, Mr.

Jukes, to whose tutorial charge I had been consigned by Jeremiah Wilkins. In some colleges such a connexion would have prevented my attending the lectures of any other tutor. But no such rule was observed at Exeter, where generally speaking we were distributed pretty equally among the three public tutors, under such restrictions as circumstances rendered desirable.

Thus, for example, men of a mathematical turn—which I grieve to say I never was—were placed under the especial charge of our junior tutor, a distinguished mathematical as well as classical scholar, and a warm-hearted little fellow as ever lived, though somewhat priggish, as we thought, and over-scrupulous about small matters.

I have lived to reverence his memory, and to mourn over the obstinate perverseness which led me to reject his advice, oftentimes for no other reason, I am afraid, but because I did not fancy the tone in which it was given. “In point of fact,” to use his own pet phrase, I was a foolish boy then, who refused the most wholesome food

because it was not seasoned exactly to my taste.

How plainly do I see him at this moment as he used to appear fifty years ago, in his queer little blue coat with its gilt buttons—he was not yet in holy orders—basking in the fierce blaze of a fire which none of us dared approach, his large face shining with perspiration, his raised forefinger quivering with eagerness as he unravelled for us the mysteries of Aldrich's Logic, or interpreted the rough old phraseology of Herodotus.

His lectures, unlike those of most college tutors in those days, bore unmistakeable signs of careful preparation. Plans and diagrams were exhibited, and sometimes—for he was a clever draughtsman—he illustrated his lectures by spirited drawings of ancient Greek or Roman costumes or sketches of renowned battlefields. If his lectures had any fault, I think it was their being too elaborate.

At the beginning of term he would read to us an introductory essay of great interest; and as we went on, every line almost of our author was illustrated by

quotations from writers, modern as well as ancient, arranged with artistic skill to reflect the light of the main passage. The fault was that nothing was ever finished. The programme carried out for a time with such minute, I had almost said superfluous precision, was always huddled up at the end of term like a tragedy in a thin house.

I think, to a certain extent, he was conscious of this failing. At any rate he did his best to remedy it, by a self-imposed system of the most laborious private instruction. Morning after morning I have joined him at sunrise, to walk round and round the "Parks," listening all the time to his explanations of difficult passages that had occurred in former lectures, and admiring the wonderful extent of his general knowledge.

To this practice rather than to his public lectures, those of us who obtained respectable places in the Class list, owed most of the information that stood us in such good stead at the examination for our degrees. Like all freshmen, I was of course eager to avail myself of the first opportunity that

occurred of being present at the University sermon at St. Mary's. The inside of the Church disappointed me sadly. For anything that appeared, it might have been a Baptist Meeting-house. A dismal wooden screen with glazed doors shut out the chancel almost entirely from our view, forming a background for a lumbering pulpit, elevated on four slight legs, and surmounted by one of those unsightly fabrics, which in those days were supposed to concentrate the sounds of the preacher's voice, and hurl them point blank at the heads of his hearers. At the opposite extremity was a row of mean-looking pews, in the centre of which rose the Vice-Chancellor's throne, with desks for the proctors a little below it. The mean-looking pews were appropriated to the use of Heads of Houses and Doctors; in the area between them and the pulpit sat the Masters of Arts. Bachelors and Undergraduates, such of them as thought it worth while to attend, found room enough and to spare in the spacious galleries.

I had hardly taken my seat when the great organ pealed forth one of Händel's

sublime overtures. Wave upon wave the mighty sounds rolled through the building under the powerful spell of Vickery's touch. Whether there was really a louder burst as the procession entered, or whether it only seemed so to my excited fancy I cannot tell, but in any case the effect of the pageant was indescribably grand. First came the University verger with his silver rod, then the bedels—esquire and yeoman—the former bearing gilded, the latter silver staves. Then followed the Vice-Chancellor himself: the same little man that I had seen at his lodgings a few days before; but oh, “quantum mutatus.” Blazing in his scarlet robe with its wide black velvet sleeves, he seemed a glorified impersonation of “Alma mater,” or rather “pater,” if there had been such an abstraction. Turning round at the entrance, he bowed with great dignity to a boorish-looking man, in a Master's gown and hood—the preacher of the day, who bowed in return, and then moved off towards the pulpit, under the guidance of the University verger. Immediately behind the Vice-Chancellor followed two or three noble-

men, and then a long row of Heads of houses. Last of all came the Proctors in black gowns with open velvet sleeves and lambskin tip-pets on their shoulders.

As soon as the Vice-Chancellor had taken his seat, eight choristers stationed in the organ loft began a hymn, the principal charm of which was a duet sung by two of the sweetest voices I ever heard. Again and again they raised the strain, to which their fellows responded in a fuller flood of melody, until at last the whole choir joined in a thrilling aspiration of Glory to the triune God.

I wish the service had ended there—but now the preacher's performance began. I call it by that name, for never did I hear so heartless and senseless a rhapsody of high-sounding words. Each sentence seemed to have been constructed with a view to the melody of its rhythm, rather than to any sense or meaning. "Unholy hypothesis," "quiescent antagonism," "diaphanous sophisms;" such were the great swelling words that our preacher "crammed into our ears against the stomach of our sense,"

until some of us, I verily believe, would have cried for weariness and vexation, had such a weakness been permissible.

Of the subject which formed the staple of his discourse I never had any very clear idea. It was either the origin of human society, or the origin of evil—I am sure I forget which. But whatever it was, the effect of those periods, “full of sound and fury, signifying nothing,” was like that of water which fell drop by drop on the doomed head of a criminal in the old days of legalized torture. In some they produced almost instant lethargy—but these were for the most part the old and corpulent. What the result would have been on the tortured brains of the more lively subjects if the infliction had gone on much longer without interruption, I shudder to think, but providentially at the end of about three quarters of an hour we were relieved by an unexpected variation in the programme—the song of a little bird that had perched itself on the highest pinnacle of the sounding-board, and was now straining its throat to overpower, if it could, the flood of non-


sense that was rushing and roaring beneath it.

If thoughts of heaven were suggested by any voice after those of the choristers were silenced, it must have been by his. I recalled to mind the sparrow that found a refuge in the house of God in the good old days of King David, and tried hard to forget things present ; but I had not yet learnt to "suffer fools gladly." So indignation at the preacher's vanity and absurdity, had, I greatly fear me, a hard, if not altogether a successful struggle with the memory of better things.

CHAPTER VII.

"Excutitur, pronusque magister
Volvitur in caput."

VIRGIL—*Æn.* I. 115.

HE great event of our academical year, the Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors, was now not very far off; and lonely as I was, without sisters or ladies of any sort to exhibit in the theatre, I yet looked forward to it with all a schoolboy's eagerness. In our little college garden everything seemed to laugh and sing for joy in anticipation of the festival; not excepting even the old historic fig-tree—the descendant, so tradition said—of the famous slip brought home from Aleppo by Maundrell, the great Eastern traveller, who was a fellow of our college. Everywhere, the members of the University, from the highest don down to the meanest "persona privilegiata,"* were in an unusual

* Tradesman licensed by the Vice-Chancellor.

flutter of expectation; for we had been promised a visit from the Consort of the popular Princess Charlotte—Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg, on whom the University had already conferred by diploma the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law. He was to be the guest, it was understood, of the Dean of Christ Church, who was to introduce him to the Vice-Chancellor in the Convocation House, whence the whole body of dignitaries were to proceed in solemn state to the theatre.

I suppose no assembly ever displayed a brighter spectacle than that which met our eyes as we craned our bodies over the undergraduates' gallery, to get a sight of the part of the theatre occupied by the ladies. I think there must have been hundreds of them, of all ages, from the wrinkled saffron-skinned dowager of the Regent's Court, to the young girl just emancipated from boarding-school. I do not know that we were wiser than the undergraduates of the present day, but I think there was more method in our madness. We did not interrupt the speech of the public orator by sense-

less noises, or make men who wore odd neck-ties the butt of our uproarious wit. But whenever a public character entered the theatre, or appeared as a candidate for an honorary degree, there was no danger of our proclivities being misunderstood. Loudly and clearly our cheers rang out, or the theatre resounded with our hisses, as each statesman or distinguished soldier took his seat on the bench assigned to him. Sometimes the head of a house came in for a share of our censure or applause, but generally speaking, there was little of either until the commencement of the ceremonial. To most of our home notabilities we applied Dante's rule—

"Non ragion di lor, ma guardi e passi."

The time was too precious to be wasted on subjects of inferior interest, for had we not a duty to fulfil before the entrance of the Vice-Chancellor and his train? And well and chivalrously we performed it.

A few minutes before the arrival of the notabilities a fine powerful-looking fellow stepped forward to the front of the side gallery and raised his hand as a signal for

silence. Then, with all the modest assurance for which Christ Church men were famous in those days, he delivered in a firm clear voice the following speech. I remember the words as well—better perhaps, for I am beginning to be a little shaky in my reminiscences of recent events—as if I had heard them last week.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “gentlemen, Bachelors and Undergraduate Members of the University! Whatever difference there may be in our sentiments on other questions, there is one subject on which we all think alike; at all events the fellow who differed from us would find the atmosphere of this theatre somewhat of the warmest, I suspect. Gentlemen! I need hardly add that the subject to which I allude is the honour due to those bright beings who grace our meeting with their presence to-day. If you will take your time from me, I will promise three such cheers as Hunt and all his radicals could not produce, even with old Burdett for their fogleman. Gentlemen—The Ladies. Hip, hip, hip, hurrah!!!”

I believe it was only the unison of our

voices that prevented the cheers that followed this address from bringing down the whole theatre about our ears. Certainly a few discords would have cracked the roof if nothing worse. As it was, the order was so perfect that when our self-constituted leader again raised his hand, there was silence profound enough to let us hear distinctly the drawing back of well-oiled bolts, to admit the procession through the great door of the theatre. At that moment our fugleman pronounced the single word "Vice-Chancellor."

What the "dismal universal hiss" might have been, that greeted the speech of an unpopular orator "in another place," I cannot pretend to determine,* but certainly such another sound as this I never heard here on earth, nor ever shall. The poker-men, as we ironically called the Vice-Chancellor's bedels, stood aghast—even the high-born Prince himself, accustomed as he must have

* "He hears

From all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn."

Paradise Lost, B. x.

been to the noisy revelry of the "Burschenschaft" in a German University, seemed somewhat disconcerted, probably from not being able to make out for whom the compliment was intended. One of the Proctors turned fiery red, the other white as the lamb-skin on his shoulders.

In all that majestic procession, there was only one individual, as far as I could observe their bearing, who was not agitated more or less—the man at whom the insult was directed. If a mob, whether of roughs or of gentlemen, ever had a heart, it must have been touched, one would think, by the air of calm unaffected dignity, with which the little man walked from the door to his raised seat at the other extremity of the theatre. What he had done or left undone to justify such an outburst of undergraduate fury, I never could make out. He it was who had inaugurated the system that had raised his own college to the position which it still so worthily occupies, and exercised so salutary an influence on the discipline of the University in general. All that his most vehement accusers could ever allege

against him was that he was "small, pompous, and fiddle-faddling."

What this last epithet meant was not so clear ; but every freshman knows that littleness of stature, especially if there be even a suspicion of "pomp," will go very far towards making out a *prima facie* case against a University dignitary. I have known a gigantic proctor received with acclamation, whilst his colleague, a more estimable character in every respect, was hissed by more than half the undergraduates, because he stood only five-feet-six in his little square-toed shoes. There was another cause, which might perhaps have combined with his littleness, &c., to bring the Vice-Chancellor into contempt at this particular time.

For a long while he had complained to his most intimate friends, that his medical attendant had prescribed for him a regimen which of all others he detested the most—regular exercise on horseback. In vain had he pleaded that he had never crossed a horse in his life, and rather than do so now, he would submit to be bled, blistered, syringed, setoned, anything — everything

that the wit of man could devise for his torment.

The stern old practitioner shook his head. "Horse exercise," he growled, "horse exercise ; or dyspepsia, resulting, as is not unlikely at your time of life, in a stroke of paralysis, or such a fit of gout as will make every nerve in your body quiver for months."

So the die was cast, and a few weeks before Commemoration Day the Vice-Chancellor sallied forth at early morn mounted on a great Roman-nosed brute, awkward and ugly as a buffalo, but warranted sound and perfectly quiet—the very *moral*, as Squeaker Smith assured him, with more oaths than were seemly in such a presence, of a timid elderly gentleman's nag. Either the animal's spirit, if spirit it could be called, had been kept down by scanty feeding and hard work, or, as I rather suspect, the Master's style of equitation was such as no horse could tolerate without a protest. Whatever the cause, the "upshot," as the old gentleman called it, of a week's high feeding in the College stables was a succession

of such gambols as are seldom witnessed anywhere but in the ring at Astley's. Three times at least the Master was picked up on the Woodstock road by sympathizing undergraduates, and constrained to return to Oxford on foot, whilst his preservers galloped over hedge and ditch in chase of his truant hack. We ought to have honoured him for his courage in returning again and again to the charge, but at that time there was a "down" on the little man, and in undergraduate eyes everything that he did was wrong.

To return from this digression: in spite of the inauspicious commencement, the procession continued to advance with tolerable regularity, "keeping time," as the *Oxford Herald* described the performance, "to the soul-stirring melody of the National Hymn." Alas! except to Munday and Slatter's imagination the National Anthem in this case was as inaudible as the tones of the enchanted harp in the old fairy tale. Judging from the wearied expression of Vick^{er}y's countenance, when he took his seat for a few minutes among his brother graduates in the area of

the theatre, the battle between harmony and noise must have been a hard one. It was no fault of his that noise was triumphant, but his feelings, I suspect, were like those of the "Last Minstrel" when he discovered that

"The bigots of the iron time
Had called his harmless art a crime."

A graduate told me afterwards that all the time he sat there he went on muttering to himself about "young jackanapeses," "ass-eared blockheads," and other "judicia verbis expressa,"* much more candid than complimentary to the younger portion of his audience.

Poor old fellow! He was the last man in the University that any of us would ever have thought of annoying under ordinary circumstances, but our watchword to-day was the motto which the *Edinburgh Review* trumpets forth so vauntingly, "Judex damnatur, cum nocens absolvitur;" so, come what would and suffer who might, our first duty was to pronounce sentence on the delinquent Vice-Chancellor.

* Aldrich's *Logic*.

. After this lively commencement, the rest of the ceremonial seemed somewhat dull and flat. Men cheered the Prince as a matter of course, and listened patiently to Milman's elegant Latin prose and the magnificent hexameters of Burton; but the whole affair was becoming a weariness to us, when we were recalled to life and action by a ridiculous accident.

By a statute of King Charles I. Exeter College was bound to receive one fellow from the islands of Guernsey and Jersey alternately. I believe the College had no power of examination or rejection. All that they could do was to grumble; a privilege which they had exercised pretty freely in the case of this last specimen of "Jerseydom," as our old Rector called it.

The individual in question was a man past the prime of life, very stout, very short, very flabby, with a bald head that shone like silver in the sunshine, and a body so long in proportion to the little crooked legs that supported it as to give him what, for want of a better comparison, I may call a jug-like appearance. Whether

his early education had been neglected or not I cannot say ; at any rate his English, though perfectly intelligible, was so French in its construction and accent as to turn everything he said into burlesque. He had come up from Southampton, where he ministered to a French congregation, expressly to be present at the reception of Prince Leopold, to see, and still more to be seen, by the illustrious and noble personages and charming ladies who were sure to be assembled on such an occasion.

At first nobody noticed him except two or three Exeter men, who could not help remarking the exaggerated politeness with which he bowed to ladies whom, judging from his antecedents, it was next to impossible he could ever have known.

It was in the midst, I think, of a dreary panegyric of the public orator on some old stock-jobber or country squire—I forget which—whose name, for lack of a more distinguished one, had been inserted in the list of candidates for the honorary degree of M.A., that a loud burst of laughter startled the theatre from its propriety.

The cause of this unseemly interruption was, as far as we could make out, a white napkin, or something that looked like one, which the masters in the area were bandying like a shuttlecock from one to another, the sport being diversified by an occasional leap of the "thing" into the ladies' gallery, whence it was always returned with an accompaniment of girlish laughter.

On a bench in the centre of the area stood our unfortunate Jerseyman—bowing, beckoning, gesticulating, like a buffo at the opera. What he said we in the undergraduates' gallery could not make out; but it must have been something very amusing, for as often as he opened his mouth ladies tittered, men clapped their hands, and even grave old professors—Rigaud and Elmsley at the head of them—appeared to us to be shaking all over with suppressed emotion.

At last the mystery found a solution. The white substance—whatever it was—being hurled by the strong hand of a young M.A., the stroke of the Brasenose boat, lighted on the head of an undergraduate of

Exeter, who at once introduced it to the public as Mr. Duval's nightcap. He had watched the whole proceeding carefully from the commencement, though unable of course to identify the "rag," as he called it, until he actually became its possessor.

The poor Jerseyman, it would seem, exhausted by the vehemence of his homage to the ladies, had drawn forth a handkerchief to mop his bald head, and with it the unlucky plaything that had caused so much excitement. With this episode ended the interest of the meeting.

A few feeble-minded cheers might still be heard here and there, whenever the name of some small local celebrity was announced from the undergraduates' gallery; but we were most of us too much exhausted either to "deplaud or to hiss," so the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors were allowed to go through their manœuvres almost without interruption.

In the evening there was a grand concert, at which the Prince "assisted." He had delighted, it was said, a select party, who had been invited to meet him at dinner, by

a specimen of his wit and wonderful mastery of the English language.

Miss B. A. M. Among the "refreshers" in the drawing-room was a lady tolerably well known in those days, whose appearance indicated a somewhat unmaidenly state of excitement. To the Prince's inquiry who she was, the Dean of Christchurch replied that she was the daughter of a Canon of the House, "whom, your Royal Highness," he added, apologetically, "I cannot afford to affront."

"And a *well-primed* cannon too," retorted the Prince. "Let us hope that she will soon *go off*."

It would be an unfair trial of the reader's patience to attempt any further description of festivities of which, with very slight variations, he may read a much better account in any Oxford paper of our own times.

We drove our visitors to Blenheim; we made water parties to Nuneham; we paraded the long walk in Christchurch Meadow, and listened to music in the gardens of New College and St. John's. Those who had ladies displayed their prizes,

whilst those who had none looked placidly on, hoping for a future brighter than the present. Here and there reading men, taking a stroll in "beaver," stumbled on bosky dells, where

"Whispered young knight in accent mild
To lady fair, and lady smiled."*


All was rejoicing, as only youth can rejoice. And so ended our Commemoration Festival.

* Scott—*Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Not every Don, that folds with solemn air
His arms upon his breast, clasps Wisdom there."

J. S. BOONE.

HE end of the long vacation found me again at Oxford, a "bemooster Fuchs," as the German students call it, that is, a freshman with the first bloom of freshness rubbed off. My reading now was regulated with especial reference to my Responsions, or "Little Go," which, if all went well, would come off in the course of my second academical year.

But there was room also for studies of a more elevated character—the Ethics and Rhetoric of Aristotle, the histories of Thucydides and Livy, the poetry of Sophocles and Pindar. Of mathematics I could make very little, much to the annoyance and disappointment of our good little junior tutor, whom I was very sorry to disoblige; but as

the study of them was not indispensable, I withdrew from it little by little, until I enjoyed at last entire immunity from the maddening A B C's of Euclid's Elements, and the x y z's, little and big, of Bridge's Algebra.

An undergraduate of a neighbouring college was less fortunate in this respect. Being compelled to study Euclid *bon gré mal gré*, he devised the ingenious plan of committing all the A B C's to memory, so as to bring them out in their proper order, when called on, without having the remotest idea of their meaning.

Unfortunately, this order was disturbed on one occasion, and the result was a confusion as hopeless as that of the keeper of a menagerie who points out sloths as jackals and pelicans as vultures, because their places have been interchanged without his knowledge.

Like most undergraduates whose homes were at a great distance from Oxford, I obtained permission to reside in College during the Christmas vacation. Had I possessed the means, I believe I should have broken up my establishment at the end of the first week.

Of the few men who remained "up" as well as myself not one was a friend, hardly more than one an acquaintance. This was dreary enough, but it was nothing in comparison to the petty tyranny of the scouts, who exercised their ingenuity in devising tortures for the men whose unjustifiable residence deprived them of *their* holiday.

Under the most favourable circumstances the usufruct of the twelfth or thirteenth part of a lazy sloven was not much to glory in, but now even that poor privilege was becoming "small by degrees and beautifully less." Undergraduates were allowed no bells. I do not know that they would have done us much good even if we had possessed them, except in the relief they would have afforded to our wearied throats. All that we could do, when voice and temper were alike exhausted, was to waylay some college servant, oftener an old woman than a man or boy, and compel him or her to minister to the wants of the hour.

The cook, a sporting character, who drove a barouche in the vacations, was disabled for the present by a broken rib, the result of

a fall from his vehicle, with the old fat butler and the common-room man on top of him. So we were dependent for our *cuisine* on a sort of scullion and picker of fowls, whose practical knowledge of the culinary art was about equal to that which an apothecary's bottle-boy possesses of medicine.

Happily, my supply of coals was good, or I think I must have perished, for the winter was one of the severest I ever remember. But my chimney always smoked at first lighting ; so I adopted the plan of lying snugly in bed until the atmosphere was clear, and then making my late breakfast serve also for luncheon. My dinner was little better than a Barmecide's feast, for all of the meat that was not calcined was raw and reeking, and even the potatoes were as disappointing as apples on the Dead Sea shore.

The only meal that I really enjoyed was my tea, the success of which did not depend much on the ability of the deaf and dirty old woman in a bonnet who acted as deputy scout.

My only pleasure during the whole of those dismal six weeks was the receipt of

letters from home. Richard was too much occupied to write often or at great length, but from Katherine I received long letters full of home affection and home news.

“We had the old, old meeting,” she wrote, “at Mr. Tonkin’s, on Christmas-eve, just like the one we had before you went to Rugby, when Mr. Wilkins sang his song, and the old wooden-legged sailor made such a funny speech. Mr. Tonkin and Mr. Richards told their comical stories as usual, and our dear old Doctor made even my mother laugh, by exhibiting the face of an old woman drawn on his fist with a burnt cork, and his pocket-handkerchief wrapped round it like a mob-cap. The funniest part of it was that the words of the song that he sang about ‘an old woman clothed in grey’ seemed really to come out of the figure’s mouth.

“Oh, how we did laugh! I wish we hadn’t, for now it seems almost as if we had committed a sin in being merry when death was so near.

“Oh, Jem! The very next morning poor Mr. Borlase was found seated at his dressing

table cold and stiff. Dr. Sharpe said he must have been dead at least four hours; for you remember he never liked his servant to come into his room of a morning until he rang, and it was nearly eleven o'clock when they found him.

"Well, everything was settled for the funeral, and they were just preparing to remove the corpse, when a rough fellow, in the midst of the crowd of poor people that stood about the door, called out that they were burying the Doctor alive. They must see him first, before they would allow his body to be removed from where it lay. You know his house is not far from ours, so we saw all that was going on very plainly—and a terrible sight it was: men banging at the door with sticks, women knocking at the windows and screaming out that they *would* have a sight of the Doctor—that they would, that they might know whether he was dead or alive. So at last Doctor Sharpe opened the door, and proposed to them that four of the men should go into the house and satisfy themselves that he was really dead.

“Oh! dear Jem! I dare not tell you all that they said when they came out: it is too horrid. We heard them tell the crowd that his face looked exactly the same as it did when he was alive, only there was a sweeter smile on it.

“When Dr. Sharp told them that was only the effect of the hard frost, they had laughed in his face they said, and were only satisfied at last by some dreadful operation being performed, which proved that he was really and truly dead. You remember how we used to laugh at him for dressing so shabbily, and keeping only his bottle-boy and a one-eyed old woman to look after his house and wait upon him. Everybody knew what a practice he had, and thought of course that, living as he did, he must have scraped together a great deal of money. But only think! When his will came to be opened they found out, Richard told us, that he had not left the twentieth part of what was expected. Half his patients he had attended for nothing, and the other half, except a few of the better sort of people, never paid him if they could help it, so you may suppose

his practice was not very profitable. He had saved enough, however, to buy himself an annuity—I don't know exactly what that means, but you understand all about it—and so be able to live comfortably without practising any longer. Wasn't it good of him to go on working for the sake of helping the poor, when he might have left it all off? How sorry you and Richard ought to be now for having ever made fun of him!"

No patient of our departed friend ever welcomed the hour of his discharge from the County Infirmary more joyously than I did the first day of Lent Term. Besides the pleasure of again meeting friends, of whom I had now a very respectable number, the College lectures, the dinners in hall, the daily services in the chapel, were all so many reliefs from the dreary monotony of the Christmas vacation.

The scouts were now as attentive as they ever had been, which is not saying much; the sporting cook had exchanged his green cut-away and top-boots for the professional white apron and night-cap, and was labour-

ing as assiduously as if no rib had ever been broken, which I have sometimes suspected might have been really the case.

Horses paraded in front of the College, awaiting our gentlemen commoners and others who could afford to hire them, whilst those who, like myself, were too poor to allow themselves such an indulgence, made pleasant parties for long strolls into the country, or amused themselves with leaping and running matches on Bullingdon or Port Meadow.

My first and only visit to St. Mary's had been so unsatisfactory that I had little heart to repeat the experiment. It happened, however, that in one of my strolls after morning service in the College Chapel, I fell in, somewhere the other side of St. Giles's Church, with a queer-looking little man in a scholar's gown, who, with many bows and grimaces, entreated me to inform him whether the church nearest to us was the University Church or not. Pitying the little fellow's mystification, I volunteered to act as his guide to the real St. Mary's, which lay in exactly the opposite direction.

Never did human tongue run at such a pace as his did during our walk between the two churches. In a funny little lisping voice, he favoured me with his opinions on most of the leading topics of the day—the Regent's estrangement from his wife—the Luddite disturbances—the revolutionary movements of Hunt and Cobbett—the comparative merits of Brougham and Garrow as advocates, and Scott, Byron, and Wordsworth as poets.

"Talking of poetry," he said, "did it ever occur to you that even the lower animals may possibly have the power of enjoying its beauties, after their own fashion of course. Take, for instance, the case of that dog, who is smelling so eagerly at a heap of rubbish. Is it not possible that what to us would be a stink may be to him a beautiful poem, which he is enabled to enjoy by means of the language of smell."*

Amused as I was, I confess I felt relieved at finding that the close of this dissertation had brought us to the door of St.

* A fact.

Mary's, and so rendered further companionship unnecessary ; for I was hardly philosopher enough to be altogether indifferent to the ridicule which the little man's odd appearance seemed everywhere to invite.

Thanking me with a low bow for my great kindness, as he was pleased to call it, he placed in my hands a little limp shred of pasteboard, drawn evidently from a pocket in which he kept liquorice, observing at the same time what pleasure it would give him to renew an acquaintance "tho authpithiously inaugurated."

On the card was scrawled in distorted characters a name which afterwards made itself known for good or for evil wherever the English tongue was spoken :—

HARTLEY COLERIDGE,

MERTON COLLEGE.

His Oxford career was not long afterwards brought to an abrupt termination, principally, I believe, through the injudicious management of a well-meaning, but some-

what bearish tutor, whose coarse taunts drove to desperation a wayward spirit which might, perhaps, have been reclaimed by gentler treatment. The last I ever heard of him was from Dyce, the commentator on Shakspeare, who I suspect had more than once and again ministered to his necessities when he resided in London.

The appearance of the church that morning indicated some occurrence of unusual interest. Every bench, every inch of standing room almost, was occupied; yet there seemed no intermission of the surging torrent, before which door-keeper, vergers, proctors' bulldogs, even the stately pokermen themselves, seemed to be melting away like dissolving views.

Availing myself of my tolerably lofty stature and strong arms, I wriggled my way through the crowd so successfully as to find myself at last within a few yards of the pulpit, which was occupied by the wildest figure I ever beheld. He was evidently a man long past the prime of life, but possessing a power of lung which a stump orator might have envied. His robes,

which were those of a Doctor of Divinity, looked as if they had been flung over him by some treacherous valet, with the sole object of rendering him as ridiculous as possible. One of his long bands rested quietly enough on his chest, whilst the other, repudiating as far as it could any connexion with the sleeping partner, seemed to be taking aim at his right ear. His rusty brown wig had been so far displaced by the vehemence of his action as to display more than half of his bald pate.

Such, as far as appearances went, was Dr. Edward Tatham, the Rector of Lincoln College, a man of profound learning, but so eccentric—mad his enemies called it—as almost to justify the little *ruses* by which the Vice-Chancellor tried from time to time, though always unsuccessfully, to make him forget his preaching turn at St. Mary's. He had just concluded, as I inferred from what came next, an elaborate argument against the adoption into biblical criticism of the so-called discoveries of the modern German school.

“Against the views which I have thus

combated," these were the first words that reached my ear, "whether published elsewhere or advocated from this pulpit by men who ought to know better, I for one enter a solemn protest. If *I* had my will," he continued, "*Jarman* philosophy, and *Jarman* metaphysics, and *Jarman* criticism should all be buried together in the depths of the *Jarman* Ocean." I could not help turning round to see what effect this extraordinary protest had on the "Dons" who sat in front of the pulpit. The Bishop of Oxford was sleeping sweetly, and the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors, for any sign that they made, might have been in the same condition; but it was impossible to misinterpret the expression of disgust that overspread Copleston's somewhat coarse features. Lloyd, too, shook his head, but—as it appeared to me, though I dare say it was not so really—more in fun than in anger. As for Whately, like Sir Joshua Reynolds in Goldsmith's satire, "he only took snuff."

The sole articulate expression of dissent, as far as I could discover, came from Gaisford, whose "Oh! oh!" was pretty distinctly

audible. I believe the whole congregation might have re-echoed this cry, for anything the preacher cared. After pausing for a few seconds to recover his breath and re-adjust his wig, he started off afresh on what he called a cognate subject, the defective system of education established in our University. There was a good deal of sense, I think, in his advocacy of a curriculum not unlike that which has been adopted in later times. Latin and Greek were very well in their way, he said, and he was very far indeed from wishing the study of them abolished; but a little chemistry—he called it “cheemistry”—and a little *naʹral* philosophy and a little knowledge of modern history and modern languages were quite as essential, if we wished our University to regain the place among the learned bodies of Europe which she had lost or was on the verge of losing.

“We hear a great deal,” he said, “in this place about the ‘Little Go’ and the ‘Great Go.’ Take an old man’s word for it, my young fellow-members of this ‘famous’ University, if you give not better heed,

the time will come when you will find that your 'Little Go' and your 'Great Go' have been a 'by-go,' for you will have gone by the greater part of useful and substantial learning, or it will have gone by *you*."

Such was the conclusion of this singular sermon, which, with all its quaintness, would have been almost impressive, had not its effect been marred by the grotesque struggles of the preacher to recall to mind the usual ascription at the end of it. After pishing and pshaing for a few seconds he abandoned the attempt in despair, and pulling his wig forward on his forehead, came lumbering down the pulpit stairs and was soon lost to our sight.

There were only three other preachers, as well as I remember, who ever filled the benches of St. Mary's Church in my day, Heber, Whately, and Rolleston. Of Reginald Heber I scarcely dare speak in the language of criticism. The beautiful "godlike" features, as a heathen poet would have called them—the ever-varying light of the clear blue eye—the voice, every tone of which bespoke the preacher's deep conviction of

the truths of which his own burning words were the interpretation, all seemed to our excited imaginations to be of heaven rather than of earth.

He had chosen for his subject the shipwreck of St. Paul on the island of Melita: What I remember best was the impassioned prayer with which he concluded a description of the perils through which the passengers and crew of the Cretan vessel fought their way inch by inch, on boards and broken pieces of the ship, until they reached the land at last.

“We, brethren beloved,” he said, “like them are tossed on the waves of a stormy sea, with perils on the right hand and on the left. O God of Mercy, save us! Save us from a gulf more hideous than that which yawned beneath the Cretan mariners!”

There was nothing very remarkable in the words, I have heard more eloquent a hundred times; but the voice, strained almost to a scream yet still musical, and the air of passionate entreaty, such as a prophet might have worn when he pleaded with Jehovah for the forgiveness of a doomed

city, all was so real and yet so strange, that even stern old Dons covered their faces, and undergraduates here and there lifted up their voices and wept.

Whately, as everybody knows, was a preacher of a different school, but hardly less popular, or, after his own peculiar fashion, less impressive. Scarcely taking the trouble to conceal his contempt for the great majority of his hearers, he contrived somehow or other to rivet our attention as thoroughly as Heber had done. The last sermon I heard him preach was his famous essay on "party spirit." Reversing very artistically St. Paul's description of charity, he defined party spirit to be that which "suffereth a very short time and is unkind, envieth—vaunteth itself—is puffed up—behaveth itself unseemly;" here he paused to refresh himself with a pinch of snuff, the remains of which he jerked from him with an air of contemptuous sang froid; "seeketh its own—is easily provoked—hopeth very little—and endureth nothing at all," so far as he, the preacher, could ever discover.

In Rolleston's case a career of great promise was cut short by an early yet lingering death. I have thought sometimes that the words of sincerity and truth that flowed from his pale lips were rendered more persuasive than they might otherwise have been by the signs of bodily weakness and suffering which the most careless among us could not fail to observe. It seemed so like a realization of the Scripture, "He being dead yet speaketh."

Such were the preachers who filled St. Mary's to overflowing in my time. Others of course there were, more or less gifted, but the practice which then existed of allowing any Master of Arts to preach when his turn came, had the not unnatural effect of filling our pulpit to a great extent with "sticks," or "utterers of great swelling words of vanity," like the unfortunate specimen that I had lighted on when I visited the University Church for the first time.

My "little go" was a trifle hardly worth remembering, except for the prompt kindness with which dear good Keble, by one judicious word, helped me out of a difficulty in

which most examiners would have allowed me to flounder.

I see him now, brandishing a paper-knife, whilst he suggested the word "flashed" as the equivalent of "micuere," rather than the lifeless, prosaic term which I had employed—"shone," I think was the word, or something of the sort. This was all the intercourse I ever had with him; but whenever I open the "Christian Year," I feel almost as if I were renewing my acquaintance with a friend whom I had known intimately whilst he yet walked the earth.

Terms began and ended, vacations came and went, and I was within a few weeks of my great and final trial, when one afternoon I was startled by a knocking, so agitated and yet so peremptory, as to compel me to open my oak and admit the intruder.

He was a gaunt haggard man,

"Whose shaggy beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair."*

His dress, as far as I could distinguish it in the fading light, was that of an operative, possibly a Nottingham weaver, for there

* Scott—*Lady of the Lake*.

were numbers of them on tramp at that time, but with nothing very remarkable about it after all. Without even a bow, or the most ordinary expression of conventional courtesy, he opened the proceedings at once.

"Mr. Tregenna," he said, "this is an affair of life and death, so there is no time for compliments. You don't remember me—it would be strange if you did; but we were no strangers once upon a time, when 'Capun Jan Rezuggen' saved your mother and your little sister from death, or maybe from what would have been worse than death. Remember 'Hubba! Hubba! Barely or blud!'"

I knew the man at once, but surprise, and perhaps a soupçon of caution, kept me silent.

"This is no time for compliments," he continued, "as I said before. Help me to disguise myself—lend me the means of escaping to America—and as I hope to be heard in my last need, you shall have no reason, if I live, to repent of having saved me."

He then told me in a very few words that

he had taken up the trade of a political agitator, and in so doing had exposed himself to all the risks of such a calling. At Henley he had seen a Bow Street officer step down from the roof of a coach, of which the vehicle in which he himself was had hardly half an hour's start.

My resolution was taken in a moment. Pushing him into my bed-room, I bade him take what clothes he liked ; then I opened my dressing-case, and placed before him the means of removing his shaggy beard.

The rooms of my Irish friend, Lord K——, were in the next quadrangle, so I ran thither at the top of my speed, and bidding him ask no questions, took possession of his nobleman's cap and gown. I believe I might have taken his boots as well, or even his coat, for anything the good-natured fellow would have said in the way of remonstrance. He only smiled, and told me not to forget to bring back his "toggerly" when my lark was over.

On my return to my rooms, I found that Boskenna had made good use of the few minutes allowed him for disguising himself.

He now appeared close shaved, with a white necktie, and a self-satisfied smirk that would not have disgraced a young earl. In the place of his rusty black frock and coarse grey trousers, he had clothed himself in my best dress coat and white waistcoat, together with a pair of netted tights, over which he had drawn a pair of Hessian boots, which I could not afford to discard, though they were far too "knowing" for the ordinary wear of a reading man.

On reaching the gate we found the porter in conversation with a mean-looking little man, of no particular trade apparently, who seemed to be putting some questions to which the College official was in no hurry to reply.

Steadily and calmly, without uttering a word, or raising his eyes from the ground, Boskenna moved on towards the gate, which he could not reach without passing close to the stranger. For a moment the little man stared at him with a puzzled air, then drew himself up close to the wall, and bowed low to the silk gown and gold-tasselled cap.

"A close shave that, Mr. Tregenna, sir,"

said the porter, as soon as the strange man had passed out. "Maybe you don't know who that cove is. Well, he and I were old acquaintances once upon a time, when I was under-butler at Lord Spencer's, and he came down to look after some plate that had been prigged from our house. A good fellow enough is Taunton—in his way—but somehow or other you never feel quite comfortable when he is at your elbow. Whoever your friend is, he is no apprentice to the trade, I warrant him; for did you observe, sir, how he never once lifted his eyes from the ground. That's an old dodge of the 'family men,' as we used to call them. You may disguise yourself as you will; shave off your beard, or put on a false one if you were close shaved before; but 'tis all of no use, if you once let a Bow Street runner see your eyes, for there's no disguising *them*. There's a wrinkle for you, Mr. Tregenna, if you should ever get into trouble yourself, which is not very likely, I should suppose; but nobody can answer for the future."

"Well, thank you, porter," I said, "for
VOL. II. 12

your advice; and"—slipping a sovereign into his hand—"here is a trifle in acknowledgment of it. Only follow out your own rule, and keep your eyes shut, and—and your tongue within your teeth."

The porter took the money with a knowing wink, and was just proceeding to assure me that my suggestions with regard to silence should be attended to, when his quick eye detected the presence of a third party, one of the scouts, who all at once emerged from the gloom which the closing day was now spreading over the other side of the porch.

How much he had heard of our conversation we could not tell; but nothing had thus far been said that could seriously commit either of us.

"I will attend to your wishes, Mr. Tregenna," the porter said; "and it shall not be my fault if the fresh butter from the country is not on your breakfast-table the day after to-morrow at the latest. Good evening, sir."

And so I went back to my rooms, a mispriser of treason, as the lawyers of those

days would have described me ; but glad of heart all the same that through my help a man who had once done me and mine a great service had escaped the miseries of imprisonment, possibly the horrors of a grisly death.

CHAPTER IX.

"A dire descent, beyond the power of frost."

THOMSON—*Winter*.

AFTER my final examination, which passed off as satisfactorily as I could desire, nothing worth mentioning occurred for more than a year. I was now in a position to take private pupils, an arrangement which relieved the little portion that was left of my patrimony from any further liabilities, besides enabling me from time to time to send small presents to my dear mother.

At the beginning of the Long Vacation I was agreeably surprised by a proposal from the guardians of one of my pupils, a young Cornish baronet, that I should accompany their ward on a Continental tour. If content with the plan and with one another, we were to travel together until the commencement of October Term; but

the engagement might be cancelled at any time "without prejudice," as the lawyers say, to our mutual friendship.

Our first experience of the Continent was not altogether satisfactory. I had gone to the custom-house at Ostend, and after transacting the usual routine business, was strolling towards the port in search of G., when my attention was arrested by the appearance of a crowd of roughs, in the midst of which, strongly guarded by gens d'armes, I recognised my unfortunate pupil. The head and front of his offending, as I learnt from a commissary of police, was this. Peering about in search of a convenient bathing-place, he had stumbled on an inscription which seemed indirectly to intimate that the luxury of a bath was not altogether unknown to the natives of that barbarous region; for, as he interpreted it, it was plainly a warning to male bathers not to trust themselves to that locality, inasmuch as it was a bad place for men to bathe in—"Bad platz voor de mannen."*

* Bathing-place for men.

By a natural, though not very logical process, G. had arrived at the conclusion that if this place were bad, as the notice had unmistakeably pronounced it to be, the adjoining enclosure must be good. So disregarding the notice posted there, that it was "Bad platz voor de vrouwen,"* which, whatever it meant, could not at any rate be a warning to the male sex, seeing there was no mention in it of "mannen," he entered a small dressing-room, and, divesting himself of his clothes, plunged fearlessly into the very midst of a crowd of shrieking women. Actæon himself could not have made a worse mistake.

In a moment he was seized by a couple of sergens de ville, whom the women's shrieks had brought to the place, and hurried away half dressed to the police office, to answer a charge of "gross violation of the law and of the decencies of civilized society."

What the witnesses deposed I could only guess, the whole of the evidence being given

* Bathing-place for women.

in Flemish; but a very few words of explanation satisfied the judge that no offence was intended. So after a long address in Flemish, of which I could only make out the words "een zinnenloos Engelschman,"* the case was dismissed. Then turning to me, and pointing to the grinning faces around us, he whispered, "Solventur risu tabulæ," and so bowed us out of his office.

The next morning we started early for Brussels, where it was my fortune to make the acquaintance of a man whose hand at this moment directs the course of one of the most powerful Governments in Europe. Adolphe Thiers was a struggling young *littérateur* at that time, depending on his pen for his daily bread: but even thus early there was promise of a brilliant future. Bearing patiently with my barbarous French, the very slowness of which must have been torture to a southern ear, even if the pronunciation had been better than it was, he surprised and delighted me by the display of his conversational powers, which appeared

* A hare-brained Englishman.

well-nigh inexhaustible. Some of his theories seemed to be wild enough, as no doubt they were, and his strictures on England and the English were sometimes almost more than I could stand; but in spite of all this ours were pleasant walks, and when I quitted Brussels, what I missed most was the sight of the white hat and brown holland blouse, and the sound of the cheery tones in which my little friend used to invite me almost daily to join him in his early morning walk.

At the Hague my pupil and I were hospitably entertained by our Minister, to whom we had letters of introduction—"soup-tickets" the young attachés irreverently called them. All that I remember about him, except his pomp, is the look of consternation that overspread his countenance when the removal of a cover disclosed the magnificent roasted turkey, over whose safety he had watched with almost a parent's solicitude, now reduced by some incomprehensible sleight of hand to a black slimy mass, the very sight of which was enough to upset a delicate stomach.

On inquiry, it turned out that the short space of ten minutes, which was all the time his Excellency allowed for divesting himself of his apron and washing his hands, had been occupied by the Dutch cook in smearing the bird all over with a mixture of grease and treacle, flavoured with a little vinegar.

"Dat is beter," the old butler heard him muttering to himself; "dat is veel beter; ik vreesde, dat wij een zeer sober maal zouden hebben."*

The few days of our stay at the Hague were passed pleasantly enough, in visits to the picture galleries, rambles in the woods that surround the town, and, above all, in excursions to Scheveningen, where my pupil enjoyed sea-bathing without any risk of again playing the part of Actæon. What surprised us most was, that of the hundreds who sat on the beach, each with his little table before him, hardly one opened his mouth except for the purpose of sipping his beer or emitting a cloud of smoke.

Raising our hats as we saw others do, my

* "That is better—that is much better. I was afraid we should have had a very indifferent dinner."

pupil and I took our seats in the midst of this silent company, who were taking their pleasure "moult tristement," just as the English used to do in old Froissart's time. Our ignorance of the language troubled us very little, for even if we had had anything to say, our tongues must have remained bridled all the same. So I contented myself with the consciousness that I was at least as accomplished a conversationalist as anybody else, and went on puffing my cigar and drinking my beer as naturally as the best of them.

It was otherwise at the Dutch houses, to which our acquaintance with the British Minister obtained us admission. My experience of polite society was limited enough at that time, as may well be supposed; but I think the people that we met at those houses must all have been well-bred, for in a few minutes we were as much at our ease as if we had been in the midst of friends at home. Those who understood English were delighted to display their knowledge of our language, which some of them, especially the younger ladies, spoke with wonderful

fluency and correctness, and as everybody understood French more or less, none were altogether shut out from the conversation. So we were all pleasant together, amusing ourselves with *jeux de société* or listening to music as we felt inclined, the rule everywhere appearing to be that each guest should occupy himself in his own way, without interruption from the hostess or anybody else.

From the Hague we went to Amsterdam, and thence by diligence and *char-à-banc* to the Falls of Schaffhausen, returning from Basel to Düsseldorf in a rude craft laden with hay; for as yet no steamers had attempted the navigation of the Rhine. It was a rough sort of affair enough, but by no means unenjoyable. Night after night we used to lie in the midst of the sailors among the hay, listening to their songs, all of which they contrived to make us understand were of a patriotic character. To please them, my pupil and I allowed them to teach us one or two verses of Arndt's lay of United Germany, which had recently taken its place among the songs of the Fatherland.

Allowing for some errors of pronunciation, which our good-natured hosts seemed to think the best part of the fun, and a few mistakes of time and tune, our performance was on the whole a creditable one. I believe we sang all the better for the touch of enthusiasm which led us to despise the conventionalities of the minstrel's art. At all events there was no lack of heartiness in our singing. Again and again we made the hold of the old vessel ring with the spirit-stirring strains of the only two verses we had been able to master :—

“ What is the German's Fatherland ?
Name, name, I pray, that mighty land.
As wide as sounds the German tongue,
And German hymns to God are sung,
That is the land—
That, German, name thy Fatherland.

“ That, German, is thy Fatherland,
Where faith is pledged by grasp of hand,
Where truth shines bright from flashing eyes,
And love in hearts warm nestling lies—
That is the land—
Our undivided Fatherland.”

Little did I think, as I shook for the last time the hard hands of my humble friends, and emptied the last glass of sour Rhenish

wine to the toast of "Hoch lebe ein vereinigtes Deutschland!"* that I should live, as I have done, to see the realization of that dream. But so it is, and I for one rejoice with all my heart at such a termination of her long and weary struggle for unity.

I believe it was this sort of enforced companionship, by night as well as by day, with its little odd adventures, that laid the foundation of a friendship between G. and myself which has stood bravely the vicissitudes of storm and sunshine throughout our long lives. We have had our little misunderstandings, estrangements even; but now, tottering as we both are on the brink of the grave, he a childless widower and I—what I am, we can both of us thank God for permitting us to travel side by side the little that now remains of our journey on earth.

Early in the following year I became a Fellow of my College, a commonplace occurrence enough, which I should hardly have thought worth mentioning, but for a

* Long live a united Germany!

[illegible]

• What is the Government's Response?

Yours, name, I pray, that mighty land.
As wild as sounds the German tongue,
And German hymns to God are sung,
That is the land—
That, German, name thy Fatherland

“That, German, is thy Fatherland,
Where faith is pledged by grasp of hand,
Where truth shines bright from flashing sword,
And love in hearts warm nestling lies—
That is the land—
Our undying

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ludicrous affair that happened at the time of my installation.

The Society were assembled in the chapel after morning prayer, for the purpose of admitting me to my year of probation, when, instead of proceeding to administer the usual oath, the Rector rose solemnly from his seat, and in that queer, clucking voice of his which it is impossible to describe, but which the few Exeter men of that day who are still alive cannot fail to remember, he began to reprimand the unfortunate Jerseyman whose misadventure in the theatre had caused so much merriment at Commemoration. He had abused his privilege as a Fellow of Exeter College—thus much I picked out from the bottle of hay (if I may be forgiven the use of so homely a metaphor) of the Rector's long and somewhat entangled address—to the most unworthy purposes, inasmuch as once and again—here he cleared his throat, and the clucking, which had got a little out of tune, made a fresh start—once and again he had published in a Southampton paper, of which he was the

reputed sub-editor, a report of speeches made and resolutions adopted at meetings where none but members of the Society could have been present. When taxed with this offence by the Sub-rector, he had not only, with the most unblushing effrontery, avowed himself the author of the articles in question, but had even recommended them to some of the junior Fellows as models of composition well worth their study.

“Under these circumstances,” the Rector continued, “the heaviest punishment that I can inflict short of actual degradation will be the calling on you to listen attentively and respectfully to the words of the statute which you have so recklessly and so unjustifiably violated, the statute ‘*de secretis non revelandis*.’

Then followed such a pitiless storm of barbarous Latinity as I never in my life heard before, and never expect to hear again, until at length, either in mercy to the offender, or, as is quite as likely, from lack of power to go on at such a pace without a rest, the Rector paused, and, fixing his

dull grey eyes on the accused, with a mingled expression of reproach and sorrow, demanded, "Shall I go on, Mr. Duval?"

The reply to this question was as unexpected as it was unseemly and reckless.

"Sare," said the wretched offender, as coolly as if he had been replying to a complimentary address; "Sare, you read so well, and with so pleasing an accént, that, if agreeable to you, I should very much like to hear the rest of the statute."

These words, spoken, I am sure, in perfect simplicity, without a suspicion of offence or impropriety, were for that very reason so utterly out of keeping with the would-be solemnity of the affair as at once to close the Rector's mouth. Raising his eyes with a look of mute despair, he motioned to Mr. Duval to resume his seat, and went on with the ordinary business of the meeting.

That summer was rendered memorable by two public events—the death of the ill-advised and ill-fated Queen Caroline, and the visit of the King to Scotland, in the hope, so said the disaffected, of finding a corner of his dominions where the curses of

the people, if not less deep, would perhaps not be quite so loud as they were at home. I believe the hearty welcome given to him by his northern subjects was altogether unexpected. As the first distant sound of cheering reached his ears, he is reported to have turned very pale, and, bursting into tears, to have sobbed out, "Thank God, I have some friends left even yet."

Our Sub-rector, with hundreds of other idlers, had gone down to Scotland in the hope of witnessing some of the pageantries of a Royal progress; but in this, I suspect, he was sorely disappointed, for the chieftains and banners and pipers all looked alike draggled and shabby in the drenching rain, that continued to pour down, almost without intermission, during the whole of the Royal visit. "Please your Majesty," was the reply of Walter Scott to the King's testy complaints of the weather—"please your Majesty, I am ashamed of it."

In deference to the recommendation of a committee of ladies appointed to consider and report on the important question of the Royal costume, the King had consented to appear

and yet was it his manner with a
 kind of sternness and sorrow,
 "Duval?"

The young man looked at him
 with a calm and fearless

face, and the wounded offender, as
 if he had been brought to a com-
 plete standstill, said: "Sure, you read so
 well, and with so pleasing an accent, that
 I should very much
 like to hear the rest of the sentence."

These words, spoken in perfect
 sincerity, without a suspicion of offence
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That summer was remarkable for
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in the semi-nudity of the old Highland garb. This result, it was rumoured, was mainly due to the urgent advocacy of an aged lady of rank, a member of the committee, who had argued vehemently that "as his Majesty's stay was likely to be a short one, they ought *to see as much of him as possible.*"

Perhaps on the whole it was as well that the common people saw less of their Sovereign than their betters did, for the effect of the metamorphosis, the Sub-rector told us, was singularly unpleasant. Even young well-built Englishmen, who had donned the tartans for that occasion only, looked miserably awkward and out of place in the presence of real Highlanders; so it was hardly likely that the appearance of an old gentleman of sixty, and he fat withal, would be greatly improved by the change, King though he were, and clad in the royal tartan of the Stuarts. Still the people, hundreds of whom had trudged for hours through the rain and mud to see their King, were loth to give up all hope of catching a glimpse of him, be the weather what it might. He was

their ain King, they said, and they had as good a right to look at him as the gentles had. "If he could do naething better than sit a' day i' the ingle neuk, he suld ha bidden awa' a'thegither. It was little they thought of a man who let weather stand in the way of welcome."

Such was the muttered judgment of the hill folk, who in that ungenial climate hardly knew the difference between fair weather and foul. And so it was that in this, as in almost every other public action of his life, the kindly intentions of this most unhappy of monarchs were frustrated through his own selfishness and weakness of purpose. The chieftains indeed, who were admitted to his presence, spoke rapturously of the grace of his deportment and his fascinating conversation, but as far as the people were concerned the Royal visit was a miserable failure.

The spare time which must intervene between my taking my bachelor's degree and my admission to holy orders being longer than usual, in consequence of my having entered at a very early age, I resolved,

by the advice of my good old friend the Sub-rector, to fill up a year or so with the study of modern literature. For this purpose the most eligible residence seemed to be Bonn on the Rhine, where all the advantages offered by a German University might be obtained at a smaller sacrifice of comfort than elsewhere.

So to Bonn I went, accompanied by my friend G., who was now a graduate as well as myself. Of our year's residence in this seat of learning I have not much to record. With the "Burschenschaft" we had little intercourse, disliking as we both did the noisy revelry of their social meetings no less than their senseless brawls, which were the pest and the shame of every German University in those days. But we had many friends nevertheless, especially among the professors, to most of whom our Sub-rector, himself an old student of Göttingen, had given us commendatory letters.

To do justice to the kindness of those simple, warm-hearted men is far beyond my power. The invitation given at our first meeting to consider their houses as our own, meaning-

less as it would have been in the mouth of a Spaniard, was in their case the honest expression of a desire to serve us to the utmost extent of their ability. Everything was ours as far as we chose to avail ourselves of their offers. Their time, their libraries, their frugal family meals, seemed all to belong to us as much as to themselves. Even the shy *Fraüleins* learnt after a time to return our greetings without trepidation, though the stiffness of German etiquette prevented much intimacy with them.

On holidays we either crossed the Rhine, in company with a German friend of our own age, to visit, like the "*drei Burschen*" of the song, some "*Frau Wirthin*," at whose house we were accustomed to refresh ourselves after rambling among the hills of the *Siebengebirge*, or ate our simple meal on the terrace of the ruined castle of *Godesberg*, or strolled may be even as far as *Rolandseck* and *Nonnenwerth*. Then there was the *Gesangverein*, of which we were honorary members, though our English shamefacedness withheld us from joining the boat parties, where all were ex-

pected to take a part in the choruses, in the presence even of the great Beethoven himself sometimes. Oh how we envied the imperturbable self-possession of our German friends, who seemed neither to know nor care who listened to their minstrelsy. Provided the "ich"—the inner consciousness, that is, of which we used to hear so much—were satisfied, they troubled themselves little about the judgment of the outer world.

Once in the course of the long vacation we found our way into Switzerland, in company with a troop of fellow-students, under the guidance of a professor, who delivered lectures on botany among the Swiss Mountains, and on the bright flower-studded shores of their lakes and rivers. It was in the course of this ramble that we fell in at Chamouny with our old acquaintance Corporal Dornford, who was staying at the village in company with a Russian professor—Hamelin I think his name was—with a view of accomplishing what was then a very rare feat, the ascent of Mont Blanc.

Little did we anticipate, as we shook

hands with them at the hotel door on the morning of their departure, the occurrence of a calamity which a few hours later made the village a scene of lamentation and mourning. Yet so it was. Old men who had passed their lives within sight of the mountain had pointed out to the party unmistakeable signs of a change of weather, bright as the sky then was. But the glitter of a heap of English gold, which the exploring party had displayed before them, had so dazzled the eyes of the guides that they could not or would not perceive the danger. There would be time to go and time to return, they said, before the storm burst on the mountain. If the gentlemen were ready they were willing to start at once. It would be soon enough to turn back when they saw the clouds rising.

It was an anxious day for the villagers and for all of us, for it was impossible to close our ears against the ill-omened vaticinations of the old men, who wandered restlessly from cottage to cottage, filling the hearts of the people—especially of the

women—with vague fears of they knew not what.

The whole of that night was bright and almost cloudless, with hardly any wind; but on the following morning the sun seemed to be waited on by a small copper-coloured cloud, which rose as he rose, growing steadily larger and more dense as the day advanced, until it hid the mountain from our sight.

Never shall I forget the wail that burst from the crowded congregation of the little village church, when the priest, after a whispered conference with one of the old men who had just entered, turned to the people and, in agitated tones, besought them to join with him in special supplication for their brethren on the mountain, whose lives, he had just learned, were now in imminent peril. If the storm continued to increase, as it had done for some hours, few of them were likely ever to see their homes again.

I have read somewhere of a funeral—that of Martin Luther I think it was—where the service of the dead was wailed

rather than sung. Such was the response of the villagers of Chamouny to this appeal. The cry that burst from the doomed citizens of Nineveh, or that arose in Egypt when men found that there was a corpse in every house, could hardly have been more impassioned.

This was no time for stereotyped prayers. Each after his own fashion gave utterance to the agonized thoughts of his own heart. The words might differ, but that for which all prayed was the same—Mercy! mercy! mercy! Mercy on those whose feet were trembling on the verge of the dark river that separates time from eternity, or perchance had passed beyond it—mercy on fathers and mothers, on wives and children—mercy on all, yea even on the heretic strangers who were sharers of that great peril!

The wind had now freshened to a gale, with the accompaniment of heavy rain, which, as all knew too well, would be snow on the mountains. Hour after hour we watched and prayed, until at last, when hope had well-nigh died out, we saw at a distance

the forms of men gliding like spectres through the mist.

“Hurrah! hurrah! they are saved! Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Domine Deus Sabaoth! Le bon Dieu a eu pitié de ses enfans!”

Alas! it was not so. Three of the guides were sleeping at the bottom of one of those terrible chasms from which no human skill or human strength could avail to withdraw them. It would seem that the rope by which the whole party held on to one another had either broken or, as was more likely, had slipped out of the frost-stricken hands of the leaders. By the aid of their spiked staves the men had brought themselves up before they reached the brink of the gulf; all but the three last, who were hurled through the thin bridge of snow that concealed the crevice, down, down to certain destruction.

As far as human compassion could avail for the consolation of the mourners, Dornford and his companion discharged their duty nobly. It is so long ago that I cannot remember whether the unfortunate sufferers

were married men or not, but in any case many were dependent on them ; and among all these the alms of the rescued travellers were dispensed with no niggard hand.

After this melancholy episode, we had little heart to penetrate further into the mountains. A fortnight or so yet remained of our vacation, but under the circumstances we deemed it best to return to Bonn with what speed we might.

On our return to England I found letters from my mother and Katherine, announcing the engagement of Richard to the very young lady with whom in our old schoolboy days he had trod a measure at the Helston furr. She was the only daughter of a Falmouth merchant, who, by persevering industry and the strictest integrity, had raised himself to a high position in the commercial world. One line, added by the dear old fellow himself, announced their intention of waiting until I was duly qualified to perform the ceremony. "No marriage," it said, "till Jem can join us together."

My return to Truro was welcomed not

the forms of men pining like spectres
around the ice.

Instantly, however, they are saved!
"Gloria, gloria, gloria. Domine Deus
salvum nos fac!" and a hundred other
prayers.

It was not so. Three of the guides
were standing at the bottom of one of those
vertical fissures from which no human skill
or human strength could ever withdraw
them. It would seem that the rope by
which the whole party held on to one
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On returning to England I found letters from my mother and Katherine, announcing the engagement of Richard to the very girl with whom in our old schoolboy days I had had a measure at the Helston fairs. She was the only daughter of a French merchant, who, by persevering industry and the strictest integrity, had risen to a high position in the country. One line, added to the letter, allowed himself, announcing that he was waiting until I was able to attend the ceremony. I am sure that they can be as well as well.

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only by those who were nearest and dearest to me, but by the whole town almost. Among my first visitors were Jeremiah Wilkins and Donald, the former of whom presented me with a Greek epigram, the latter with a copy of Latin hexameters, each after its own fashion lauding me to the skies. Mr. Tonkin's compliment was of a more substantial character—a Bank of England note for 100*l.*, and the full, free, and entire transfer of Ada, “to have and to hold,” as old Mr. Richards whispered, when he slipped his own generous contribution into my hand. Even Betty and our old cook were ready with their little offerings. It was not much that I had achieved after all, but places in the class list and fellowships of colleges were rarities in our part of the world in those simple old times, and the winner of them was honoured accordingly.

I think the present that gratified me most was a little filigree casket, presented with many blushes by Richard's *fiancée*. The gossips said that such a gift was altogether irregular; that I ought rather to have made *her* a present. I think even my mother

leant to this opinion, and so did Katherine, but the young lady, backed I suspect by her lover, would have her way, as she has often had it since, but always for good. So I received at her hands the first pledge of a friendship that has lasted steadily through the whole of our long lives.

Amidst all this sunshine there was one shadow, as dark almost as the little cloud that I had seen waiting on the sun in the valley of Chamouny. My dear mother was sadly changed, I thought, though those who saw her daily were unconscious of any alteration. What I liked least was the listlessness and lack of interest in all that went on around her, which seemed so strangely inconsistent with her lively, cheerful temperament, such as I had always known it.

Dr. Sharpe, whom I consulted at once, told me that there was no organic disease as yet, so I strove with all my might to be hopeful. Only one resolution I made, that I would not again leave her for any length of time. I had no great fancy for a Cornish curacy, and would gladly have made her a home elsewhere; but my mother's

resolution was not to be shaken. Where she had lived all her days, there she would die, she said, and be buried by the side of those who had gone before.

So I was fain to accept a forlorn curacy in the mining districts, to which, in due time, I was licensed by the Bishop of Exeter.

CHAPTER X.

"From darkness here and dreariness
We ask not full repose.
Only be Thou at hand to bless
Our trial hour of woes."

KEBLE.

IN one sense my curacy was a "sole charge," seeing I had nobody either to control or help me in the performance of my duty ; but, as Mr. Richards jocularly remarked, I was obliged to change the *venue* for three months in every year to a wild moorland parish in the north of Devonshire, which my rector held in conjunction with his Cornish preferment.

Nine months out of every twelve were passed by him in this Devonshire parish, which he had chosen for his principal residence from the first, because, as he always told us, it was his birth-place. Possibly there were other reasons that had their due weight with him, though he never cared to talk much about them.

The son of an Exmoor farmer, he belonged to a class of clergy not quite extinct, even within my memory, who were very slow indeed to acquire the ordinary manners of civilized society. Associating almost exclusively with their old schoolfellows and compatriots, of whom there was always a large batch at Exeter College, they returned from the University to their moorland homes with every prejudice strengthened, and every peculiarity of manner and accent, if not actually intensified, certainly not softened down in any appreciable degree.

In these days of easy communication, when the question of a man's birth-place possesses little interest for any but the vulgar, it is difficult to realize the fact that half a century ago, or less, the estrangement between the inhabitants of the two western counties, at all events of those portions of them that lie within a dozen miles of the Bristol Channel, was as complete as if the one were situated somewhere in the neighbourhood of Copenhagen, and the other on the shores of the Bay of Biscay. Except along the great trunk road that

traversed both counties, the means of communication were so few and so expensive as to render distant journeys all but impracticable. So men were content for the most part to dwell among their own people, nursing all the while the most unreasonable prejudices against their neighbours over the border, and clinging to the usages of their fathers, with a pertinacity that resembled the grasp of the shell-fish on their own rocks.

My good old rector was by no means an exception to this rule. The kindest, gentlest of beings as long as he remained among the people who had been taught from infancy to love and honour him, no sooner did he cross the frontier than he became fretful and captious to an unbearable extent. Perhaps some little excuse for this might be found in the behaviour of his Cornish parishioners. With the shrewdness of their race, they had soon taken the level, as they expressed it, of their rector's understanding. The sermons to which his moorland flock had listened year after year with admiration, if not with much actual benefit,

were sneered at by the Methodistical miners as "poor ould milk and water trade,"* hardly worth listening to, even if they had been delivered in tolerable English, which they were not.

Poor fellow, he felt himself to be, as indeed he was, a stranger in a strange land. If he tried to talk to his poorer parishioners, they only laughed at his peculiarities of speech, which, if not worse than their own, were at any rate less familiar to them. He had few neighbours, and those of a class not likely to take much interest in him or his concerns. So the poor man, and his still more sorely-trying wife, were fain to sit at home by their fireside and murmur at the hard destiny that compelled them to vegetate at Lanbriggan through the worst three months of every year.

This period of enforced residence had just commenced when I entered on the duties of my curacy.

"I dew envy yew, my young friend," the old man said, as we shook hands at parting.

* Stuff.

“ Yew will be in a furrin land, ’tes trew, at Challacomb; but ’tes a very deffernt sort o’ plaace from this here. They went* abewse yew and annoy yew, though yew be a furri-ner, I can ashore† yew of that. My people be rough, but they be always kind to other folk, especially to strangers. I wish I could zay as much of the people hereabouts.”

So to Challacomb-on-the-moor I transferred myself and books, leaving my mother and Katherine to pass the three months of my absence with Richard and his young bride. He had recently entered into partnership with Mr. Richards, and on the strength of that very promising arrangement had established himself in a pretty cottage at an easy distance from the town.

I didn’t much like this plan of combined housekeeping; but a winter’s journey through the wild regions that lay between my two curacies would have been fatal to my poor mother, even if I could have persuaded her to quit her native county. So I was fain to yield to Mary’s earnest pleadings

* Wont.

† Assure.

that "dear mamma," as she already began to call my mother, should come to them. She *would* have it so, she said, whether I liked it or not. She wasn't going to begin her reign with an act of cruelty. What difference could it make, except in the pleasure, whether she and Richard sat down to dinner opposite each other like two dolls in a baby house, or had dear mamma on one side of them, and Katherine on the other? She was a famous nurse, and so was Katherine, she knew, so I might be sure that I was leaving my invalid in safe hands.

There was no resisting an authority so peremptorily asserted : so to Challacomb-on-the-moor I went, as soon as I had seen my mother settled comfortably in her new quarters. My heart was heavy enough, it is true, but I could not now draw back from an engagement into which I should never have entered but for the hope that such a separation might not be necessary. Thank God ! I was permitted to see her again before the end came.

My reception by the rector's churchwarden, who was to be my host during my

residence at Challacomb, was as kind as if I had been "ould measter" himself. A few of his brother farmers had been invited to meet the new curate. To own the truth, they were but a rough lot, though civil and good-natured enough in their way. Their attentions to the Exmoor mutton and Exmoor trout and the various knick-knacks of pastry that clustered round a huge squab pie in the centre of the table, like vassals' huts beneath the walls of a baron's castle, were too engrossing to admit of much conversation until the cloth was removed. Then it was that my host rose, and in a hearty, if not altogether "neat," speech, proposed the health of "ould measter and his young coorate."

I suppose my reply was not much more intelligible to them than Mr. Shapland's oration had been to me; but it was kindly received nevertheless. Our attempts at conversation were not quite so successful. Some notion of what their dialect was capable of I got from the words of an Exmoor love-song, which my host's eldest daughter, a pretty girl with a sweet soprano voice,

sang to us after supper alternately with her "young man," for such I guessed the young farmer to be who joked with her so pertinaciously about the "kissing-crust" of the huge family loaf.

Our Cornish dialogues were coarse enough, but compared with this specimen of Exmoor amatory poetry they were models of refinement. I give one or two of the least objectionable verses as a specimen :—

HE.

"Yew wesn't sa skettish weth Rager Tardrew,
Up to Parracomb Tewsday wes week."

SHE.

"Yath and troth than I cudn't refewse un a kiss,
When 'Kiss un' the veddles squaiked out,
But I took'n a whop and a whisterpoop tew,*
To mak'n mind whet h' wes about."

I believe the conversation of our guests was very much in the same strain : but this I inferred rather from the peals of giggling laughter that followed the remarks of the gentlemen—especially those of a fat-headed old fellow who was evidently the wit of the neighbourhood—than from any actual meaning that I could as yet attach to the sounds.

* I gave him a blow and a box on the ear.

Yet, with all this apparent coarseness, the girls of that parish were, as a rule, as good and modest girls as any in the county. The worst that could be said of them was, that they expressed themselves in the same language that their ancestors had used in the days of Queen Elizabeth, calling things by the plainest of names, without a suspicion of indelicacy or even of inappropriateness.

The next day my host and I employed in making visits of ceremony to the principal farmers, all of whom received me with a homely cordiality that won my heart. From the fat-headed old gentleman, who, I soon found out, was the people's churchwarden, I received a sort of official lecture on my duties, and on the dangers likely to beset me in the discharge of them, the whole illustrated by choice anecdotes of the troubles into which neighbouring clergymen had fallen through not listening to good advice.

"Yew be a yung maan, Mr. Tregenna," he said, "zoo yew'll ex-kewse my freedom, I'm shewre. 'Tes best to wern* 'ee,

* Warn.

afore yew begin yewr wurk that us doant went* no 'novations' in this here parish. Us have goood on in the ould way vor vorty year and more with the ould maan down to Lanbriggan, and us doant like no changes. Now doant 'ee be wenting a clean surplice more than wance in six months, if yew stay so long; and doant 'ee go for to raid part o' the sarvice from the taable, instead o' stopping in the pew as ould measter always doth; and doant 'ee zay nothing about sarvices except a Zendys. Wan thing in special I must tell 'ee about; us wont never stand the 'Militant.'† Us be kept long nuff from our denners a Zendys without that; zoo doan't 'ee think o' havin' of un, there's a good lad. Then about yer ev'ry-day manners, doant 'ee be steff and formal, like ould Parson Burrows in to Moulton, but just take our ways in gewd paart, as they be meant. Take yer glass o' zider when 'tes offered 'ee; and if yew like a gallop now and then wi' the harriers, nobody wont have nothing to zay agin it. Ye will preach all

* Want.

† Prayer for Church Militant.

the better vor it, when Zandy com'th round. Why there's Parson Brayley up to Withycombe keeps a pack vor the amusement o' his zelf and his parishners ; and I should like to zee the maan that would speak agin un for that, or anything else he doth, anywhere wethin ten mile o' his ould passonage house. A Methody preacher tried that game wance, and got a dookin in pewl* for's pains. They would a killed un, most like, if ould Passon hadn't come in time and took un away."

From all this I inferred that provided only I kept clear of "novations" and wasn't "noways proud," I might do pretty much as I liked.

It was a perilous position for a neophyte with no one to guide him, without even the wholesome, though it might be somewhat vexatious, censorship of a rubrically disposed old lady, to keep me from sins of omission ; or of a single Methodist to watch jealously over my Protestantism, that it sustained no damage from intercourse with neighbouring

* Pool.

High Churchmen. Still I could not help loving the parish and its people, rough as they were, and trying to do them all the good in my power. A native of the county might have done much more than I ever accomplished ; for, friendly as they were, I soon found out that they would resent anything in the form of reproof from a "Cornish boy," as a blacksmith once called me, after we had been carrying on for an hour or more a warm discussion on the lawfulness or unlawfulness, scripturally considered, of getting drunk at Barnstaple Fair and at the yearly parochial feast.

My last Sunday was signalized by a magnificent musical performance in the church, got up, Mr. Shapland told me, entirely in honour of myself. The first official notice that I received of this intention was a solemn warning from the clerk that "next Zandy arternoon I was not to goo on with the prayer arter the third collic tell he tould ma." The array of beauty and fashion that thronged the church on that day—I am quoting a fulsome article that appeared the next week in a Barnstaple

paper—was absolutely overwhelming. The singing gallery in particular was crowded with young men and maidens, all prepared to take an active part in the ceremonial. Conspicuous among them was Rhoda Shapland, supported by her “young man,” who was to sustain the principal tenor part. Then we had two or three basses, who sang to the accompaniment of an awful instrument called a bassoon, and tenors in plenty, and counter tenors, with fiddles and haut-boys and flutes, to support and help them out in case of any mistake occurring.

At the part of the service indicated by the rubric—and by our clerk—I paused, as in duty bound; and after an invitation from that functionary to the congregation to join him in singing a “hanthem”—angry enough he would have been if one of them had presumed to accept it—the instruments underwent a final tuning, and the performance began.

I had had very bad accounts of my mother’s health lately, so was little inclined to be merry under any circumstances. Perhaps it was as well that it should be so,

otherwise the consciousness of my responsibilities would hardly have sufficed to check my mirth, unseemly as it would of course have been. For never, I should think, since the days of the first player on the harp and organ, was there such a performance, vocal and instrumental. I could have stood the squeaking of little fiddles and the droning of big ones, and of that awful bassoon, and all the other eccentricities of the rustic art, if only the words of the "hanthem" had been sung a trifle less ludicrously than they were.

Rhoda led off with a solo, which she sang prettily enough. True she called Moab "Mooab," and wash-pot "wesh-pot;" but I was too well accustomed to their dialect to take much notice of that. It was only when the antiphon was taken up by her young man, with an energy that threatened to crack the plaster of the whitewashed roof, that I began to feel uncomfortable, though I was still in happy ignorance of the surprise in reserve for me.

After a good deal of fiddling and trumpeting, the chorus took up the words that

had been sung by the two principal performers, who still continued their song at intervals. Thus the anthem was "done" after a fashion altogether unprecedented as far as I know, but wonderfully impressive all the same, if one might judge from the open mouths and staring eyes of the rustic congregation.

Thus far there was not very much to complain of. But then began what Mr. Shapland told me was considered by far the finest part of the performance—a repetition of the words by all the voices in turn, with appropriate instrumental accompaniments. Then, after a final burst or rather crash of melody from the chorus, in which all the words of the anthem contrived to find places by fair means or foul, and a brilliant flourish of the instruments, the effect of which was slightly marred by one of the big fiddle-strings going off with a crack, the performance was brought to a close.

The middle of the following week saw me safely housed, with my mother and Katherine, in the parsonage at Lanbriggan. My rector had started the previous day for

had been sung by the two principal voices
 from which will continue their song &
 interest. The 12th stanza was "Gloria"
 which began altogether in the same manner as
 in a I know, but wonderfully interesting
 all the way. It was much that from the
 open mouth and starting eye of the vast
 congregation.

The 12th stanza was not very much a
 specimen of the true English style. The
 subject was the collection of the 12th
 part of the performance. The 12th part
 of the was by all the voices in turn, with
 appropriate instrumental accompaniments.
 Then, after a final burst or rather crash of
 melody from the chorus, in which all the
 words of the anthem continued to find places
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 of the instruments, the effect of which was
 slightly varied by one of the big fiddlers
 stopping off with a crack, the performance
 was brought to a close.

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Challacomb, where he always spent his Christmas. I was a good deal shocked at the alteration in my dear mother's appearance, but her colour was so bright and her spirits so lively that I ventured, against my better judgment, to hope that she might yet be spared for years. Alas! it was a hope that was soon laid in the dust.

As my parishioners at Challacomb had breathed out their adieux in song, so was I destined to receive the greetings of my new flock after the same melodious fashion. On Christmas Eve, before I was well settled into my first sleep, the trampling of feet on the gravel in front of the parsonage warned me that some demonstration or other was at hand. I had not long to wait for an explanation of the sounds, for no sooner did I appear at the window than a choir of men and boys, belonging, as I afterwards learnt, to a neighbouring Wesleyan chapel, began singing very sweetly one of those carols, or "curls," as we called them, in our provincial dialect, which have been sung from time immemorial by the Cornish peasantry on the eve of our Lord's nativity.

CAROL.

The first good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of One,
To see the Lord of Life become a man in blood and bone.

CHORUS.

O the holly, the holly, the holly for me,
For 'tis our dear Un (Aunt) Mary's tree.

The next good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of Two,
To see how with a word the lame were made to leap and goo.

O the holly, the holly, &c. &c.

The next good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of Three,
When her dear Son, the Lord of Life, did make the blind to see.

O the holly, &c. &c.

The next good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of Four,
To hear her Son the Saviour preach His Gospel to the poor.

O the holly, &c. &c.

The next good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of Five,
To see how by His word he made the dead to be alive.

O the holly, &c. &c.

The next good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of Six,
When cruel murderers to the cross her Son with nails did fix.

O the holly, &c. &c.

The last good joy our Mary had, it was the joy of Seven,
To see the Lord of Life ascend unto his throne in Heaven.

O the holly, &c. &c.

Rugged as these verses were, to my fancy
they seemed to intertwine themselves with
the words chanted by the legionaries of
heaven on the night of the Nativity. Again

and again I heard the sounds as plainly as if they had actually been uttered close to my ear, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace!" Was not this an assurance that peace was attainable by man, if only he would seek it in the way appointed. Throwing myself on my knees, I prayed, as I had never prayed before, that I and those who were dear to me might be made partakers of it.

As I prayed, passages of Holy Writ wherein the aid of God the Spirit is promised to those who ask it in faith crowded into my mind. One text there was that especially afforded me comfort—the assurance that God careth for us, and *therefore* that we may cast all our care upon Him. The time, I felt, was close at hand when Katherine and I should sorely need comfort; for the light which my return had fanned into momentary brightness had sunk down again into the socket, and was fast dying out.

How thankful I was that our dear mother was still strong enough to kneel by Katherine's side at the holy table, and receive from my hands the mystical body

and blood of her Redeemer. I think it was the happiest day that any of us had passed for many a long week, for certainty had at length taken the place of agonizing suspense.

Richard and his wife had come to us the previous evening, and joined, of course, in the services of the day.

"How mercifully God has dealt with me," my mother said, as we all sat together round the evening fire, "in permitting me to look once again on the faces of all my children before I die. I am no talker, dear James, on religious subjects—nor ever was; but this much I venture to say to you and to my other children—that I have a good hope. The night is far spent, the DAY is at hand! Read me the Psalm, James, that your dear father used to be so fond of: the one, I mean, that has the words 'Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.'"

I read her the 23rd Psalm, and then we all knelt down before her, and she blessed us, as she used to do in the old nursery days.

As she withdrew her hands wearily from Katherine's head, I thought I saw the grey hue of death stealing over her features. But it was not so. Week after week, and month after month she lingered on, rallying from time to time with all the mocking hopefulness of her terrible disease: but losing ground all the while.

Thank God, the blows of the rod fell very lightly now. Her cough had almost entirely left her, and there was hardly any difficulty of breathing; the only symptoms, indeed, that remained of the malady that was consuming her, were the emaciation of her limbs, and the slow but steady decline of her strength. She was too feeble, now, to join us at our meals, but on sunny days she loved to breathe the fresh air, reclining on a sofa in the warmest corner of our little garden. She would lie there for hours, with no sign of life except the movement of her lips from time to time, and the feeble motion of her hands, which told of communion with those who were invisible. The presence of any of us for more than a few minutes at a time only wearied her now, so there was no inter-

ruption of my parochial work, which in that enormous parish was very heavy.

More and more strongly the truth impressed itself upon my mind, as weary and heartsick I returned day after day from my round of visits, that our parochial system, as at present administered, is insufficient to supply the spiritual wants of the large populations which commerce has called into existence in Cornwall and elsewhere.

Oftentimes, as I wandered up and down among the scattered dwellings of what all but in name and form was a great city, I blessed God that any means, however irregular, had been devised of filling the aching void in those poor people's heart, which the Church had left almost untouched. With all its faults, I believe the co-operative system of the Wesleyan body to be the one best calculated to effect this object. Where a clergyman has been toiling on, as hundreds do, in single-handed helplessness, spending and being spent with hardly any visible result, there the light-footed skirmishers of the Wesleyan army will attack successfully the outposts of the enemy, forcing the people

to listen to them, whilst they reason of temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come.

The rector had expounded the doctrine hundreds of times, as faithfully and almost as energetically, perhaps ; but the walls of his deserted church had no ears to hear. It seemed, too, as if the hearts of the people were hardened against his exhortations, except, indeed, in the season of affliction, and notably in the hour of death, when his ministrations were always welcome.

I am loth to say anything hard of men so devoted as the Wesleyan Methodists seem to be, and are, I doubt not, for the most part ; but thus much I am forced in candour to allow, that their visits to the sick, even of their own communion, were in my time so few and far between, as to contrast unfavourably with the fearless discharge of that important duty by the parochial clergy.

I believe this to have been the result, like the conceit which was but too common among them, of the peculiar circumstances in which so many of them were placed, raised as they were to the teacher's chair

when they ought to have been sitting humbly at the teacher's feet. Thus their ignorance was the parent oftentimes of arrogance and presumption; whilst the unwillingness to face danger so common to vulgar natures, held them back from the discharge of an obvious duty. It would be unjust to attribute either of these faults altogether to the peculiarities of their religious system.

"Tiresome as they are," a neighbouring clergyman once said to me, "they would be ten times as bad if they were irreligious. But for the teaching they have had, imperfect as it is, their conceit would have been brutal insolence, and their shyness about facing danger abject sneaking cowardice."

Perhaps it might have been otherwise if the Church, instead of frowning on Wesley's well intended efforts for the conversion of his heathen countrymen, had cherished in her bosom one, who to the hour of his death clung lovingly to her fellowship. Then his wonderful powers of organization might have been utilized, without prejudice to the unity of the Church. The zealous, but for the most part less than half instructed mem-

bers of the new brotherhood would have been trained and disciplined by the authority and teaching of the regular clergy, whose sickly spiritual life would, on the other hand, have been quickened into energy by the example of their zeal. At the time of which I am writing there seemed still some hope of such a consummation. In my own parish, as elsewhere I believe, the relations between the heads of the Wesleyan body and the clergy were of the most friendly character. None attended more regularly at the parish church when the Holy Communion was celebrated; none seemed to sympathize with us in our affliction more cordially than they. On my study table there stands a little model of our font, which the resident Wesleyan minister at Lanbriggan wrought for me with his own hands.

“We have all entered into the Church of Christ by this door,” he said, as he placed the little offering in my hands at our last meeting. “O that we could walk together even unto the end in unity and brotherly love. I am old, Mr. Tregenna,

and foolish, it may be. At any rate I know that younger men are beginning to think differently on this question. Nevertheless, my prayer shall be, as long as these old lips can utter any prayer at all, that the Church may be ONE. I think, even yet, there would be hope, God helping us, of such a termination of our long estrangement, if we could learn, on both sides, to bear with one another's infirmities and peculiarities in a more loving spirit than we do; if, like the Israelites of old, we would help every one his neighbour, without too nicely questioning our neighbour's right to help *us*."

I am no disparager of Apostolical order, God forbid that I ever should be, but there was a good deal in this speech that set me a thinking. Might not after all one great cause of our failure in the home mission field be this—that we oftentimes suffer the ears of corn to rot on the ground, rather than employ irregularly commissioned labourers for the gathering in of that rank harvest?

But these after all were mere idle speculations. My business was to do the work set

before me as diligently as I could, without puzzling myself about questions the solution of which could have no practical result as far as I was concerned.

In our own household the Wesleyan element was tiresome—to say the least of it. The great stumbling-block was the difference of our views on the Sabbatarian question. In vain did I rack my brain for arguments to prove the difference between the joyous weekly festival of the Christian Church, and the Jewish Sabbath, as the Scribes and Pharisees kept it in the olden time, and as our household wanted to keep it still. In vain did I point out—well, it skills not to relate what I said—since the only effect it produced was a request from cook that my mother would “suit herself” at the end of a month; and an intimation from Betsy the little housemaid, that it was only in mercy to a poor afflicted creature like my mother, that she broke the Sabbath by heating water on that day. If she could not find rest, according to the commandment, in our family, she must go elsewhere to seek it—that was all.

They were good reasonable girls enough in other respects, and very kind withal and attentive to my mother. So I hastened to assure cook that if she would only withdraw her notice, not even a potato should be boiled in our kitchen on the Lord's Day. We had long ago conceded to her the right of attending class-meetings at any hour of the day or night that might suit her convenience. So as there was nothing further to dispute about, we went on again as well as we had ever done. The most rigid Sabatarian of our establishment was a great awkward lout of eighteen, whom I had hired to look after Ada, and clean our shoes and knives. On him argument would have been utterly wasted, so I got what work I could out of him on the six "lawful days," as the Scotch call them, leaving him to spend two-thirds of his Sabbath in bed, and the remainder—as he always told me, though I have since had cause to doubt it—at the Wesleyan chapel.

To wait on Ada was a labour which I often performed, even on a week day, for the pleasure of feeding and petting her; but the

neglected condition of my Sunday boots—the only pair I had of the sort—did vex me a little, I confess. Even the cleaning them overnight, supposing him ever to remember that part of his duty, would hardly in that humid climate have ensured satisfactory brilliancy on the following morning. So I cut the knot of the difficulty by cleaning them myself, just before I started for church.

I was teaching at the parish school one day, when an urgent message from Katherine recalled me to the parsonage. For many days our dear mother had lain motionless, so that when I entered her room for the last time, I was slow to recognise the presence of death, until its unmistakeable hue spread itself over her features. She had passed away so tranquilly, that none could tell me at what moment she had ceased to breathe. We buried her in the old churchyard at St. Vallery, by the side of him whom she had loved so loyally even to the end.

There was now no further reason for remaining in my cure beyond the end of the present year. So I gave six months' notice

of my intention to the rector, and at the expiration of that time entered on my duties elsewhere. The only event, I think, that signalized my departure from Lanbriggan, was the defection of my Sabbatarian groom, who disappeared on the last Sunday morning, carrying with him my best coat and waistcoat ; and wearing, I presume, the boots, which his scruples had hitherto withheld him from cleaning on that day.

CHAPTER XI.

“Und als sie traten die Kammer hinein;
Da lag sie in einem schwarzen Schrein.”

BURSCHENLIED (*Student's Song*).

THE curacy which the kindness of an old College friend had obtained for me, was that of a large parish in the north of London. The rector, an aged man and very infirm, had asked him to recommend a steady young man, with no extreme views, who would be willing to undertake, with the assistance of a deacon, the charge of his enormous parish. In the present day such an arrangement would have found plenty of “aggrieved parishioners,” to denounce it. But it was not so in the times of which I am writing. Even the deacon had been an afterthought, for the original plan, I afterwards learnt, had been to let me drudge on single-handed as long

as I could, just as my predecessor had done.

I believe the absence of extreme views, which in my case was unmistakeable enough, was my strongest recommendation to the old man's favour. The great dread and misery of his life was being written about in the *Times*, consequently the slightest movement in the direction of novelty alarmed him. The word "innovation" was to him as terrible a bugbear as, pronounced after a somewhat different fashion, it had been to my worthy Moorland parishioners. So all remained as it had been probably for the last hundred years and more. The part of the "people," on which the rubric lays so much stress, was performed by a solemn official in a black gown, who also gave out the psalms. We sung only Brady and Tate in those days, with a choir of shrill-voiced charity children. Poor little things, they did their best; but it was a dreary substitute for the congregational psalmody, in which the pompous procemium of the clerk invited every one of us to take a part. After every verse the

organist played a symphony, expressly, as it would seem, for the purpose of enabling the congregation to stretch themselves and look about them.

Every part of the service was of the same dull character except the sermon, which was preached by dear old Harness, a man well known at that time, not only as an eloquent and impressive preacher, but still more as the kindest, most genial of human beings — a character which had obtained for him the affection of a troop of friends, of all grades of society, from the highest noble down to the poor crossing-sweeper to whom he gave his daily dole. His acquaintance was especially large among literary men, to whom, with all the generous unselfishness of his character, he delighted to introduce obscure youngsters, such as I was.

There was hardly a distinguished writer or artist of that day that I did not meet either at his house or at the houses of my dear old college friends Forshall and Dyce. Milman, Sydney Smith, two or three Kembles, male and female,

Miss Mitford, and a host of "*stellæ minores*," were guests from time to time at his small house in Heathcote Street. So small it was that the addition of two or three "olive branches" round about his table would have driven the overflowings of the company into the little entrance hall. But as the philosopher said of old, "it is not the house that makes the man, but the man that makes the house."

Never, even in "gilded 'alls," as one of his guests, a rising publisher, was pleased to pronounce the word, could parties have been more delightful. Sometimes the wit of Sydney Smith would cause even the majestic greengrocer who officiated as butler, to stuff his napkin into his mouth, in the vain hope of stifling his irrepressible laughter.

Once, through Harness's kindness, I was honoured by an invitation to dine at Holland House, but whether the wit which had flashed so brilliantly round his little rickety table was chilled by the atmosphere of a palace, or whatever the cause was, the entertainment went off flatly, I thought, in com-

parison with those which I had enjoyed so rapturously in Heathcote Street.

Our Rector, after a certain fashion, had been a distinguished man, too, in his day ; but that day had long since departed, leaving few traces behind it. For his excellence as a preacher consisted entirely in the elocutionary skill with which he humoured the bald truisms which he was wont to string together in the form of a sermon. His own estimate of his discourses was correct enough when he told me once very candidly that if I would take the trouble to read one of them I should be surprised to find how very little there was in it. In his younger days he had been a teacher of elocution, and in that capacity had made the acquaintance of statesmen whose friendship afterwards stood him in good stead when he applied to Parliament for an Act sanctioning the levy by means of Church-rates of an enormous sum for the building of a new church in the largest square of his parish. It would be hard to say that he was in any way responsible for the wantonness with which these funds were squandered ;

but the result, I fear, was the estrangement of many a wavering Churchman, whose secession might perhaps have been prevented by more judicious measures. Twenty thousand pounds had been sunk, one of these men told me, in the construction of catacombs before a stone of the walls appeared above ground. The architect had been sent out to Athens to study carefully the temple which was to be the model of the new ecclesiastical edifice. What the result was any of my readers may judge for themselves, if they think it worth while to make a critical inspection of the building ; but to me it always seemed unsatisfactory. It is true an enormous number of people found accommodation, such as it was, in the little incommodious pews, by which, with the exception of a very few free sittings, the whole area was occupied ; but the general effect was much more that of a well-filled concert-room than of such houses of prayer as I had been accustomed to see at Oxford and elsewhere. The paltry, though expensive ornaments of the apse, whose grey unstained windows shed a dim, if not

a religious light, in Milton's sense of the word—the shabby table, with not even a monogram to relieve the monotony of its velvet shroud; the elaborately carved but cumbrous reading desk, with its corresponding pulpit, standing like sentries one on each side of the aisle; the pretentious, but shabby galleries—all told of a puritanism which loved not or dared not display a single emblem of our faith in any part of the building, and yet did not scruple to lavish thousands on frippery better suited to a theatre than to the “place where God's honour dwelleth.”

I think the only dispute I ever had with my rector was about our font, of which I ventured to propose the removal from the position within the altar rails, which it had occupied ever since the consecration of the Church. How it got there I never could find out—but there it was—and there, the rector almost swore it should remain as long as he himself breathed the air, such as it was, of his dingy London home.

“When I am dead, you may remove it, if you will, but not before,” was an argu-

ment, to which of course there was no reply. So I made up my mind to bear patiently the questioning and sneers of my country brethren, of whom one or two dropped in almost every day, to feast their eyes on the glories of a London Church. All that I could tell them was, that the position of the font was none of my choosing, neither was I in any way responsible for the scandal, which the arrangement seemed to occasion. But these petty annoyances were nothing in comparison with the dreary monotony of my daily duties.

Once every day my colleague and I sat in the vestry, awaiting the arrival of candidates for the blessedness of wedded life, who seldom failed to claim our services, especially on Sundays. I shall never forget my consternation, when my first peep through the half-open vestry door, disclosed a batch of bridegrooms and brides, all duly ranged in front of the altar rails, to the number of twenty-four couples, and, as I afterwards found out, with best men, fathers, and bridesmaids, in due proportion. In my dismay I should have mixed them all up together in in-

extricable confusion, but for the volunteer aid of a young lady, a coryphée at one of the great theatres they told me she was, who kindly gave me the benefit of her experience in grouping the characters, as she somewhat lightly expressed it. But my difficulties were not at an end yet—some even of the ladies were stupified, I greatly fear me by drink, and could hardly be made to comprehend the questions put to them, though their condition was hardly so obvious as to warrant my turning them out of the church—some whimpered, some giggled, whilst a French couple contributed the last ounce to the load of embarrassment, which had well-nigh crushed me already, by whispering in their own language that neither of them understood a word of English. Happily, for this last evil I was able to improvise a remedy by repeating the questions in French, their replies being of course in the same language. So that difficulty was got over. Then came the registration, of which I was compelled to take more than my fair share, by signing their names for most of them, and then guiding their shaky hands, whilst

they made a cross in token of their recognition of the signature. Our baptisms were on a still more extended scale, nearly three thousand in the course of the year, as well as I remember, with churchings in proportion.

From eight o'clock in the morning, until nearly the same hour at night I was occupied on Sundays in these routine duties, varied only by my taking a full share of the morning service, reading prayers in the afternoon, and generally preaching in the evening. Amidst all these enforced labours, there was not much time left, it may well be supposed, for the exercise of purely spiritual functions. What I could, I did, in visiting the sick and our parochial schools—but it was a miserable perfunctory affair altogether. I laboured indeed, because I recognised the duty of labouring; but I felt all the time, unmistakeably—miserably, that as yet I was not one of those,

“ Whose joy is, to the wandering sheep
To tell of the great Shepherd's love;
To learn of mourners while they weep
The music that makes mirth above.”*

* Keble—*Christian Year*.

All this I had yet to learn. But the time was at hand, though I knew it not, when sorrow such as few experience in their journey through life, would be my school-master to bring me to a better knowledge of myself.

Meanwhile I toiled on, as the disciples wrought on the sea of Galilee, as I had seen our fishermen labour often and often in the old St. Vallery days, making little way against the tide, but never, never abandoning the hope of eventually reaching the haven where I would be.

Of my many friends, not the least sincere was a barrister of high reputation, who resided with his family of daughters in one of our squares. I think he had known something of my father in bygone days, but I scarcely needed such a recommendation as this, for his heart seemed to yearn towards me with almost a father's love before we had been acquainted a month. I believe the secret of this was my likeness to a son of his—an only son, who had stained the sands of some African desert with his blood a few months before my arrival in London. The

horrors of his death, related in her hearing by an indiscreet friend, had snapped the cord of another life. After a few weeks of intense suffering, Mrs. Raymond had gone down also to the grave, leaving her three surviving children to the care of their broken-hearted father. Never was love repaid more loyally than that of Mr. Raymond was by his three motherless girls. Ellen, the eldest, a bright, hopeful girl of twenty, was his house-keeper, the companion of all his leisure hours, the link, as he used to say—whilst the aching wound of his great sorrow was yet green—that connected his weary spirit with her who was now a denizen of heaven. The two little girls were still at school at a town on the sea-coast—so Ellen's life would have been solitary enough during her father's hours of attendance at Westminster, but for the friendship of Katherine, who soon learnt to love her with almost sisterly affection.

Hour after hour we three used to pace the square gardens together, talking at first of little besides the heavy sorrow that had fallen on her and hers. But as time wore on, Ellen became more and more reconciled

to her bereavement. Then, by degrees, our talk became less sombre. We had many interests in common. Ellen's greatest delight for years had been to visit our parochial schools, and to take her part in the Sunday teaching. She would gladly have helped the choir too, for she was an accomplished musician; but the mere mention of such an "innovation" brought on a fit of spasmodic coughing, which had well-nigh ended the rector's days on earth. So that plan was of course abandoned. He used to look very suspiciously even on the few members of our congregation who ventured to raise their voices above the conventional whisper in making the responses—such a novelty was hardly defensible—but for an unofficial person to usurp the functions of the choir! What *would* the Times say? She might as well propose at once to push the parish clerk from his stool.

After a time, Mr. Raymond also began to rally a little. I think the first smile that I ever saw on his care-worn face was occasioned by a ridiculous contretemps that occurred at one of our services.

The Bishop of London had consented to preach on behalf of our infant schools. To give force to his appeal, the little creatures, to the number, I think, of three hundred or more had been ranged in seemly order close to the pulpit. With the tender winning eloquence which distinguished Bishop Blomfield's addresses on such occasions, he was setting forth the advantages of such institutions, and urging on his hearers the Christian duty of supporting them by liberal contributions.

In the energy of his appeal he stretched forth his right hand towards those who, as he beautifully expressed it, were the model of the converted disciple's character—the lambs whom Peter was commissioned to feed, in token of his love to the great Shepherd of the Flock; when all at once there rang through the church, from all the three hundred little voices, a shrill cry of “Horizontal.”

Raising his finger and assuming as stern a look as he could call up for the nonce, the Bishop uttered an impressive “Hush!” which produced another and a louder shout

of "Perpendicular! perpendicular!" After a minute or two's confusion the small rioters were reduced to submission and the service went on. I suspect the cause of infant schools was rather promoted than not in our parish by this little episode.

But in truth, it mattered little who preached, or what was said in our church on behalf of any charitable institution, for owing to the wretched system common in those days, of holding plates at the church doors to receive the contributions of the people, instead of collecting from seat to seat, a third of our congregation generally escaped scot-free, leaving the support of our charities to the parishioners, whose business, according to the ethics of those times, it was to maintain them.

I remember a churchwarden telling me once, that of six hundred persons, as nearly as he could calculate, who passed out of one of the galleries after a touching sermon by Robert Montgomery, only twenty placed even the smallest coin in the plate, which he held out to them.

Katherine and I had established ourselves

in a small house in one of those grim little streets that cluster about the Euston (or, as it was then called, the New) Road but this arrangement was likely soon to be disturbed by an event, unexpected by myself, but long since foreseen by the clearer eyesight of Ellen and her sisters. My sister had accepted an offer of marriage from the rector of a London parish, an old and very dear friend of my own, who had been accustomed, as Harness expressed it, to run tame about our house ever since we had been in London. A better fellow never lived, nor a more earnest Christian minister, in a quiet undemonstrative way, than the Reverend Edward Hamilton.

There were no prudential reasons for deferring their union, so after a brief consultation with Richard, who happened to be in London at that time, the whole affair was settled, and one bright morning in Easter week Katherine and Edward plighted their troth to each other in our parish church. Gladly would I have spared them and myself the pain of listening to and celebrating the maimed rites, which in our unfortunate church were called by courtesy the Marriage

Service, but not to mutilate would have been to "innovate," and I knew too well the awful import of that word, to do anything that could possibly awaken suspicion.

I had long since forgotten all about Edward Boskenna and his fortunes, when a few months after Katherine's marriage a letter reached me bearing the New York post mark, and enclosing a bill of exchange for twelve pounds.

"Dear friend in need"—thus this strange missive began—"the doomed stirrer up of sedition—the outcast, whose prospects for eternity not long ago were as dark as his condition here on earth, can raise his head now, and speak face to face to the man who stood by him when all else either forsook him or added their yelp to the cry of the scoundrel pack set on his track by a slavish faction. I have gone through many a trial since I wore my nobleman's cap and gown at Oxford; but, God be thanked—and I *can* dare to thank him now—all has worked together for my good. Mr. Tregenna, I am a changed man; but I have no right to weary you with the parti-

culars of my change, or with my crude speculations on a subject, in which I never thought to take an interest, the relation in which man stands to his God.

“It will be more to the purpose to tell you, what I know you will rejoice to hear, that after a succession of disappointments which nearly drove me mad, I have found at last an employer who is willing to take me on trust, without troubling himself about my antecedents. In the old country such a thing would be past belief, but here my case is that of hundreds, who, as the old song says, ‘have left their country for their country’s good.’

“I believe the Lord Mayor, or whatever they call him, of this city was a man who landed here a few years ago with neither character nor clean shirt; and now he is a millionaire, or something near it, and hundreds of others could tell the same tale of themselves if they thought fit.

“When the news of my father’s death reached me a few months ago, I felt as if at any risk I must see the old woods of Boskenna once more before I died. But the very

next mail set that question at rest by bringing me the pleasing intelligence that the estate, of which I had been fool enough to join the old man in cutting off the entail, had all—house, lands, woods, meadows, manorial rights—gone to the dogs together, or to old Tonkin of Truro, which I take to be much the same thing. So here I am hard and fast, a citizen of the U-nited States, as they call them here, content to live and die under the shadow of Uncle Sam's protecting wing.

“May God be with you, my one solitary friend in the old country. In this world we shall never meet again. I am not advanced enough in my religious belief yet to talk much about another life, but let us hope for the best.

“The enclosed bill of exchange for 12*l*. will cover my debt to you, principal and interest, I think. I have tried again and again to scrape that sum together, but never succeeded until now. I shall never sign my own name again, and you would not recognise my new one. So I must content myself with asking you to remember

Captain J. R. and B. or B. I think you cannot well misunderstand that sign.

“To the Rev. James Tregenna.

“Direct your answer to the head clerk at Messrs. Sullivan & Schenck, 207 Broadway, New York.”

The light of my little dingy dwelling had departed with Katherine. I went about my daily tasks wearily, as I had seen overworked signalmen do on the railway which had recently been established between Manchester and the metropolis. The Raymonds were all down at their place in Surrey, where they always passed the long vacation, and I had little heart for visiting anybody else after working hours. So I sat evening after evening in my little drawing-room, making believe to read, but meditating all the while on a project which I had long been shaping into form, though the execution of it would probably have been delayed for months but for Katherine's secession.

My name now stood high on the list of Fellows of our College, and in all probability the choice would soon be afforded me of accepting or declining a college living of

fair value, within a day's journey of London. Why should I not ask Ellen Raymond to be the sharer of my parsonage? I had long felt that without her my future life would be little better than a blank, but I question whether as yet I should have ventured to tell her this, had not circumstances precipitated the disclosure, as they generally do in such cases.

The senior chaplain of Clerkenwell prison, whose share of duty I had taken for weeks together, in the summer months, was now in a position to repay the obligation. So I gladly availed myself of his offer of assistance, and went down for a few days to the Raymonds', who had often pressed me to visit them in the country.

Mr. Raymond's long vacation leisure was little better after all than labour somewhat relaxed, so day after day I spent most of my time in the society of Ellen and her little sisters, helping them to cultivate their little gardens or wandering with them among the Surrey hills, or visiting, under Ellen's guidance, some one of her many pensioners. Old as I am, I dare not trust myself further

with the memory of days which seem all the brighter now that I contrast them with a sorrow such as few men have been called on to bear.

Suffice it to say that I returned to London an engaged man, with the full approbation of Mr. Raymond, subject only to the condition that our marriage should be deferred until I became incumbent of the college living of which I have already spoken. But there was better preferment than this in store for me. I was just preparing for a journey to Oxford, for the purpose of obtaining from the College my presentation to the Warwickshire benefice, which had very recently fallen vacant, when a letter from my old friend and pupil G. altered my plan altogether.

“Dear, dear old friend,” it began; “little did I think, when we last parted, that we should ever again be neighbours—but so it is—unless indeed you are a heartless old fellow, and refuse to hold communication with me on such a matter. Most unexpectedly our good rector has been promoted, if promotion it be, to a colonial diocese, where, as

I tell him, whatever he has to complain of, it will not be of cold. But for conscience sake, I suspect he would rather have remained a humble rector—but you know the man—I am only thankful that the climate of his new charge is not worse than it is. Now to the point, ‘in einem Worte’ as we used to say, you remember, at Bonn—will you supply his place?—ay or no. If your reply is in the negative, so much the worse for you, for I shall run up to London and ballyrag you, as we say down here, until you consent—but I hope better things of my old chum. Lady G. has heard somewhere that you are going to be married. Base old traitor! not a word have you ever written to me about it; but we will receive you and your wife kindly all the same, and it shall not be the fault of either of us if you are not as happy as you deserve to be.”

There was no place for hesitation here, for independently of the opportunity which it would afford me of being nearer the most attached, and almost the oldest of my friends, the value of the living was almost double that of the College preferment. So

with Ellen's hearty concurrence, I wrote at once to signify my acceptance of my friend's offer. There was now no further obstacle to our union, which, it was arranged, should take place immediately after my return from St. Mervyn, whither I was obliged to go for induction. Grasping my hand affectionately, as he laid it on the key of the great church door, the future Bishop blessed me in my going out and my coming in, in my basket and my store, but above all in the work and labour of love which I was about to undertake.

Then we parted, and after a weary journey of three days and nights, I found myself at Mr. Raymond's door. There was a strange blank look about the house that seemed of evil augury, though in the failing light I was not able to discern the cause. My knock brought, instead of the butler, an old female servant, who had once been Ellen's nurse. My heart sank within me, as silently and sadly she pointed to the door of a room on the ground floor. I entered softly, as one who feared to disturb that awful silence.

* * * * *

On her own little bed lay my darling,

as beautiful—more beautiful than I had ever seen her—but with the cold fixed smile on her face that speaks indeed of peace, but not the peace of earth.

What became of me for hours after I had seen that sight, I know not; but I awoke at last to the full consciousness of my misery. The first to visit me was the kind old medical attendant of the family. He would have urged me to ask no questions until my strength was somewhat restored; but he soon saw that the terrible suspense was driving me to the very verge of madness, so without further preface he began his story. My darling had for months past suffered from time to time from neuralgic headache, for which the skill of regular practitioners seemed unable to find a remedy. In an evil hour she had had recourse to an advertising German quack, whose prescription, as it afterwards appeared, had been compounded according to the rules of some Berlin or Vienna pharmacopœia. Who was to blame was never known, but no sooner had she swallowed the draught than she fell death-stricken to the ground. In

a moment almost their medical attendant was standing by her side—only to pronounce that all was over. The brain of the strongest man on earth, he said, must have been paralysed under the influence of that deadly potion. Heart-broken as I was, I was yet the only member of that stricken household capable of taking order for the celebration of the last rites.

In our old happy days I had often described to her the burial customs of my Cornish parishioners, especially the singing of hymns as the procession wended its slow way along the churchway path.

The last time we ever worshipped together the villagers had sung a harvest hymn, which spoke, too, of that second harvest when angels should go forth to gather the great husbandman's wheat into his garner. Again and again that evening Ellen had spoken of its suitableness for a funeral hymn, until her poor father, saddened by such talk, had forbidden any further conversation on the subject. Now, to enjoin the singing of this hymn seemed a sacred duty from which I dared not shrink.

The rector of the parish, a good old commonplace creature enough of the evangelical school, was startled at first at such a proposal, but he was not the man to add by his refusal another pang to hearts lacerated as ours were, so slowly and reluctantly he allowed us at last to have our way. As the funeral procession traversed with slow and solemn steps the meadow that lay between her father's home and the church, the children of her school raised the harvest hymn, which they had sung so joyously hardly a month before :—

HARVEST HYMN.

Great God ! Thou on our fields dost pour
The early rain, the latter shower ;
Thy voice the buried seed obeys,
Thine arm the blasting death-wind stays.

Formless and void the mouldering grain
To dust returns ; to rise again
Bright emblem of our second birth,
Bursting the prison bars of earth.

Bright emblem still, when, harvest o'er,
The goodman gathers in his store ;
When tares are burned, and reapers' hands
Bind firm the golden wheatsheaf's bands.

Lord, in the harvest of that day,
When angels Thy behest obey ;
When sickles gleam and reapers dread
Bring home the harvest of the Dead ;

Grant that the seed in sorrow sown,
Life-gifted by Thy grace alone,
Changeless and bright, for evermore
May garner, in Thy heavenly store.

At the grave her little sisters strewed on her coffin the flowers which they were to have borne as bridesmaids at our wedding. And so we parted—the dead to await the call of the great Husbandman—the living to mourn—one of them with a life-long, but not a hopeless sorrow.

The tale of my life's experience is ended. In the society of my dear old friend, and of Richard's widow, who since her husband's death has resided with her two unmarried daughters in our village, I find as much of earthly comfort as I desire. Slowly and steadily I am yielding to infirmities which tell of a course well-nigh ended now. With all the humility that befits a sinner of sinners, I dare to utter the words which my dear mother spoke to us on her deathbed—

“The night is far spent, the DAY is at hand.”

NOTE BY THE EDITOR. .

Mr. Tregenna's journal had not been long in my possession when I was summoned in hot haste to St. Mervyn Parsonage, where my old friend lay a-dying.

How far I am justified, as his executor, in bringing to light this record of times the memory of which has been well-nigh whizzed and whirled out of men's minds by the feverish career of more modern events, I leave my readers to decide for themselves.

"Non meus hic sermo," the story is none of my telling, so I can await with equanimity the appearance of criticisms which, whether favourable or adverse, would have disquieted the spirit of a nervous recluse, such as my friend was in the latter years of his life.

THE END.

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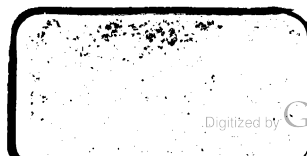
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